THE

PARADISE OF DELIGHTS.

OR

The B. Virgins Garden of *Loreto*.

With briefe Diſcourſes vpon her Diuine Letanies, by way of Meditation.

For the comfort of all ſuch, as be deuout vnto her; and deſire her holy Patronage & Protection.

By I. S. of the Society of IESVS.

Fulcite me floribus, ſtipate me malis. Cant. 2.

Permiſſu Superiorum, M. DC. XX.

TO THE RIGHT
HONOVRABLE
AND MOST
WORTHY ENGLISH
GENTLEMEN,
OF THE SODALITY
OF THE IMMACVLATE
CONCEPTION
OF THE EVER B.
VIRGIN MARY,
IN LOVAYNE.

RIGHT
HONOVRABLE
AND MOST
WORTHY,

COMNENVS the Emperour is moſt highly cõ-
nended by Venerable
ntiquity, for that after
glorious conqueſt, and
mous victory ouer his
yled enemies, he pla-
d a beautyfull Image
the B. Virgin in the
ũphant Chariot, pre-
red for himſelfe; That

the Mighty Citty of
Rome, Lady and Mi-
ſtreſſe of the VVorld,
might vvitneſſe, hov
duely and faithfully h
did honour & reuerenc
her, through vvhoſe ay
and aſſiſtance (next afte
God) he atchieued th
ſame. A greater victor
haue you obtayned ou
farre more potent en
mies; and your gratefu
mindes & feruorous d
uotions in aduaunci

he honor of the Bleſſed
Queene of Angells, and
ovverfull Empreſſe of
he vvorld, vvill not on-
y be a moſt faithfull re-
ognizing of her ready
elp, to the full accom-
lishment of your ſpiri-
uall Conqueſts; but al-
o yield a moſt ſvveet &
ragrant odour, of this
reſent age, to all true-
arted Catholikes; and
eaue a moſt memorable
xample of your vertu-

ous endeauours to all Posterity.

Lib. de prouid. cap. 1.

Seneca vvorthily vvrites, that, *Inter bonos viros & Deum amicitia est, conciliante virtute* : Betvveene good men and God, there is a straite band of friendship, by reason of Vertue. Wherby it comes to passe, that by your Generous actes of vertuous life, hauing contracted, and (by your earnest seeking to ad-

uaunce

uaunce the honor of his Elected Mother) confirmed this perpetuall league of perfect Amity vvith God; there muſt needes followv that friendly & familiar communication, that heauenly comfort, and vniforme conſent of harts, both vvith God, and amongſt your ſelues, vnto vvhich they only are vvorthily to be admitted, vvho haue deſerued

to beare a part in this ce-
leſtiall harmony, vvher-
by to be made truely
happy.

My vnvvorthynes
therfore finding you ſo
highly eſteemed in this
melodious Quire, doth
preſent this little Trea-
tiſe vnto you; not much
vnlike to poore people,
vvho vſe to offer trifling
Nevv-yeares-giftes vnto
Great men, thereby to
make their vnvvorthy

Preſents

Preſents an humble petition of ſome greater guerdon, and revvard. So if my ſlender labours might gaine ſo much honour, and make me ſo happy as to be remembred in your deuout, & much reſpected Com-munity, I ſhould thinke my ſelfe moſt aboundantly ſatiſfied. This my vnpolished lynes doe humbly requeſt, not by any vertue frō themſelues,

ues, but for her ſake of vvhom vve novv treate. In hope vvherof I reſt,

Yours ſincerely affected in Chriſt Ieſus.

I. S.

THE

THE PREFACE to the Reader.

GENTLE Reader, If thou be of the Blessed number of those, whose comfort and proffit I seeke in this little Treatise; let me desire thee to plucke of thy deceitful spectacles of Curiosity,

rioſity, and peruſe my plaine lines vvith deuout ſimplicity; othervviſe thou art like to finde thy labour of as little effect, in regard of vvhat thou ſeekeſt of me, as I shal find my hopes of ſmall expectation, for vvhat I deſire to vvorke in thee.

Moyſes *vvith admiration did ſee the* Bush, *in vvhich Almighty God appeared, burning, but not conſuming, vvhich*

made

made him the more desirous to behold that great and vvonderous vision; but yet vvas commaunded to plucke off his shooes before he might haue accesse. The like counsell I find giuen by S. Bernard, *to those vvho curiously desire to behold the diuin misteries, vvhich the Eternall VVisdom of Almighty God hath vvrought in this mysticall Bush, the most Blessed Virgin his*

Mother.

Mother. Thou wilt not so much admire the Gedeon *Fleece besprinckled with dew, as to behold a woman clad with the sunne, yet not consumed with so great an heate.* Meritò quidem admiraris Moyses (*saith he*) & curiosiùs desideras intueri; verumtamen solue calceamenta de pedibus tuis, & inuolucra pone carnalium cogitationum, si accedere concupiscas. *Not*

Bern. serm. in Apoc. 12

without

vvithout cauſe thou doſt admire (O holy Moyſes) & more curiouſly doſt deſire to behold; but caſt of thy shooes from thy feete, and bridle the inordinate deſire of thy flesh, if thou deſire to approach.

No curious conceite but a pure intention, no earthly affection, but true deuotion, no faygned loue, but a dutifull reſpect muſt bring thee to the preſence of this ſacred Queene, to the

ſight of this blazing ſtarre, into the moſt eſteemed fauour of the euer Bleſſed mother of God. Read therfore vvith deſire of profit, & my beſt vvishes shalbe as my intention is, that it may turne to the great honour of God, and his thrice happy Mother, and to the Eternall good of thy ſoule. And in thy beſt deuotions pray for me.

I. S.

A BRIEFE INTRODVCTION TO THE FOLLOWING MEDITATIONS.

THE naturall condition of mans wil is such, that of necessity it requireth the help of the Vnderstanding, to the due performance of

her noble acts, according to that vulgar *Axiome* of Philosophers, *Nihil volitũ, quin præcognitum*, Nothing can be desired, vnlesse it be first knowne, whereupon it comes to passe, that the Wil cannot work but according to the light that it hath frõ the foresaid vnderstanding: and the greater that the knowledge is of the good apprehẽded, the more doth the affection of the Will increase, and kindleth an earnest desire of the thing vve loue.

Wher-

Wherfore my intended purpoſe in theſe preſent Meditations, being to ſtirre vp the harts of al that rightly peruſe them, and a reuerend reſpect, and deuout affection vnto the euer bleſſed and moſt happy Virgin Mother of God; I muſt firſt lay before your eyes, the greatnes of her excellent Vertues, & ſingular graces (as farre as my weakenes shalbe able) that the vnderſtanding being once fully poſſeſſed vvith an impregnable conceipt of her vn-

ſpeakable Perfections, the wil may be the more ſtrõgly moued, to loue and reuerẽce ſo beautiful a creature.

To this effect I haue made choice of her deuout Letanies of *Loreto*, wherin moſt admirable tytles, and moſt manifeſt arguments of her greatnes are propoſed vnto vs; by vvhich not only our Vnderſtanding, may be aboundantly enriched with diuine conceits, but alſo our Will may be greatly inflamed with vertuous deſires. From which

two well-grounded Roots, will ſpring the beautifull branch of Imitation, the chiefeſt and only ſcope of all vertuous myndes, and the laſt marke at which all true deuotion aymeth; and vvithout vvhich both deuotion is fruitles, or no deuotion at all, and the beſt purpoſes are without effects. Witnes that worthy ſaying of *S. Ambroſe*, *Quiſquis Mariæ exoptat præmium, imitetur exemplum*, Whoſoeuer deſireth the reward of the Bleſſed Virgin Mary, *Amb. l. 2. de Virgin.*

let him imitate her exãple. And S. *Bernard* giueth vs to vnderſtand, that the perfect imitation of her excellent vertues muſt be the only conduict to conuey vnto vs her louing fauours, *Vt impetres eius orationis ſuffragium, ne deſeras conuerſationis exemplum*, that thou mayſt attaine to thy deſired effect of her prayers, leaue not to follow her laudable Conuerſation.

Bern. ſuper Miſſ. eſt.

Conſonant to this is the doctrine of the burning Lampe of Africke, & shi-

ning

ning light of the vvhole Church, S. *Auguſtine*, who writing of the true feſtiuity of holy Martyrs, ſaith, *Ab eis Sanctorum in veritate feſtiua gaudia celebrantur, qui ipſorum Martyrum exempla ſequũtur*. By thoſe indeed feſtiuall dayes of holy Martyrs are truly celebrated vvho follovv the examples of their vertues. *Fidelis ſermo* (ſaith S. *Chryſoſtome*) *& omni acceptione dignus &c.* It is a faithfull ſaying and worthy to be receiued by all men, that we ſhould imitate in

Aug. ſerm. 47. de Sanctis.

Chryſoſt. Tom. 3. ſerm. de mart.

our cõuersatiõ thoſe Saints whome we honour with ſolemne veneration.

And by reaſon of the excellent tytles which are moſt worthily giuen to the renowned Queene of heauen in theſe deuout Letanies, wherein her louing Children find exceeding Comfort and Delight; I haue thought good to entytle this ſmall worke, *The Paradiſe of delights*, or, *the Virgins garden of Loreto*. And for our better Collection, it will not be amiſſe to i-

imagine,

magine, a priuate Garden, dorned with all kind of delightfull flovvers, amid-deſt which the B. Virgin vſeth to vvalke, expecting he viſitation of her deereſt friends, and moſt deuoted Clyents. Vnto the gate of this myſticall garden, and Paradiſe, we muſt appro-ach with all humility, deſi-ring to be admitted to the pleaſant vievv of thoſe ce-leſtiall flowers, whoſe dain-ty odours haue filled the whole world with their fra-grant ſmell. And if our re-

queſt

queſt be gratiouſly granted by the glorious Queene of Heauē, & her Angels there attending on her, humbly proſtrate before her ſacred feete, vve muſt deſire, that whatſoeuer we ſhall gather out of this delightſome Paradiſe, may be to the honour & glory of her ſweet Sonne Ieſus, to the increaſe of deuotion to her gratious Selfe, and to the eternall happynes of our owne ſoules Then may we begin vvith the firſt flovver of this heauenly Garden, or

he firſt vvord of theſe
euout Letanies *M A*.
I A, the moſt venerable
ame of the euer Bleſſed &
noſt happy Virgin *Mary*,
f which we may frame our
neditation; imploring firſt
er dayly ayde and aſſiſ-
ance in the manner follo-
ving.

ORA-

ORATIO SODALITATI

a singulis in admissione recitanda.

SANCTA Maria, Mate
Dei & Virgo, Ego N. N
te hodie in Dominam, Patronam
& Aduocatam eligo ; firmiter
statuo ac propono, me numqua
te derelicturũ, neq; contra te ali
quid vmquam dicturum, aut fa
turum ; neq; permissurum vt
meis subditis aliquid contra tu
um honorem vmquam agatur
Obsecro te igitur, suscipe me i
seruum perpetuum : adsis mihi i
actionibus omnibus meis, nec m
deseras in hora mortis. Amen

THE PRAYER VSED TO BE

ſaid by thoſe, that be admitted into the Sodality.

BLESSED Virgin Mary, Mother of God, N. N. do this day chooſe thee for my Lady, Patroneſſe, and Aduocate; and do firmely purpoſe & determine, neuer to forſake thee; nor euer to ſpeake, or do any thing againſt thee; nor at any tyme to ſuffer any thing to be done againſt

gainſt thee, by thoſe that
be vnder my care. Ther-
fore I moſt humbly beſeech
thee, to receaue me into
thy perpetuall ſeruice and
protection; be preſent with
me in all my actions; and
forſake me not in the
houre of death. Amen.

THE

THE PARADISE OF DELIGHTS. OR The B. Virgins Garden of Loreto.

THE I. MEDITATION.

Of the Venerable, and sacred Name of the most B. Virgin, MARIA.

MANY pious and deuout considerations of the mysticall signification of this most venerable Name, *Maria*, haue beene

with very great reuerẽce set down by the holy Fathers: and with no lesse diligence learnedly collected by the Reuerend Father *Canisius*, in his memorable worke *Of the sacred Virgins prayses*: which for so much as at this present serue to our purpose, we may not vnfitly reduce to three.

First, *Maria*, is as much as to say *Stella Maris*, *Illuminata*, or *Illuminatrix*, that is, Starre of the Sea, or North Starre, one that is illuminated, or giueth light to others. Secondly, *Maria* is *amarum mare*, a bitter sea, or sea of bitternes. And thirdly, she is *Domina* Lady, or Mistresse. Out of the which we may frame three points in this manner.

1. How fitly this sacred Name is deriued from *Light*; and as the

North-

North-ſtar is known by the name of the Sea-ſtarre, becauſe thereby the wandering Marriners direct their courſe, the better to attaine vnto their hoped and pretended Hauen: ſo this Beautious Queen of light in the Catholike Church is placed, whoſe radiant beames of vertuous life & heauenly conuerſation drawes the eyes of all thoſe who deſire to arriue at the happy Hauen of eternall bliſſe; which being fixed vpon her vnchangeable light, muſt needs eſchew the dangerous ſhipwracke of this wicked world, vnles they willfully forſake the infallible direction of ſo faire a Starre, and blindly run thēſelues againſt the vnhappy rockes of vtter ruyne, and euerlaſting Death.

2. Moreouer ſhe is ſayd to be

Illuminata, endued with light, and this by reaſon of the diuine knowledge of moſt high and heauenly Miſteries, the which ſo firmely and vndoubtedly ſhe did beleeue, that not vnworthily ſhe deſerued to heare, *Beata quæ credidiſti*, bleſſed art thou who haſt beleeued. And as all the beautifull ſtars do participate their borrowed light which we behold from the bright ſhyning lamp of the world the Sunne, according to their capacity and greatnes: euen ſo this ſacred Queene being neereſt vnto the bright Sunne of Iuſtice Chriſt Ieſus, and moſt capable of his Celeſtiall influences, and heauenly bleſſings, did participate ſo much of his diuine light, that rightly ſhe may be called *Illuminata*, indued with light.

Luc. 1.

Furthermore ſhe is ſayd to be *Illuminatrix*, one who giueth light vnto others: For that indeed is one of the chiefeſt effects of true vertue, as our Bleſſed Sauiour not obſcurely did inſinuate vnto his louing diſciples, when he ſayd, they were *Lux mundi*, the light of the world, and preſently did annexe their proper office and function, *Luceat lux veſtra coram hominibus*: let your light ſhine before men. This, I ſay, is a rare effect of true vertue, not only to be lightſome, yea delightſome in it ſelfe; but alſo to ſhine & giue light vnto others. And this being more apparant in the B. Virgin then in all other Saints togeather, I think none will deny, but that in a ſpeciall manner, and that moſt fitly ſhe hath this diuine *Epitheton* of

Matt. 5.

Illuminatrix, one that giueth light vnto others.

2. The second Etimology, or deriuation of this Blessed Name *Maria*, is *amarum mare*, a bitter sea, or sea of bitternes, which well expresseth the sorrowfull estate of the B Virgin, in the depth of her excessiue griefe, that she suffered at the foot of the Crosse, when with watry eyes, and most heauy hart, she did behold her louing Sonne, the author of life, yea life it selfe wrastling with death, euen till death: Which dolefull spectacle did fill her tender hart with whole floudes of sorrow, whose bitter panges (as many holy Fathers haue left written to vs) did leaue her more then martyred. In which almost deadly agony, and strong encounter with a sea of

griefe,

griefe, we may behould this glittering Starre, almoſt ouerclouded with the thicke miſt of grief, yet yeelding a moſt beautiful light by reaſon of her conſtant fortitude; notwithſtanding we cānot chooſe but ſay, *Magna eſt velut Mare contritio tua; quis medebitur tui?* Thy Contrition or ſorrow is like vnto a ſea; who ſhallbe able to comfort thee? The abundant teares of *Iacob* for his murthered *Ioſeph*, the vnceſſant griefe of *Anna* for her wandering Pilgrime, the harty ſighes of *Ionathas* for his louely *Dauid*, the inward throbs of *Dauid* for his rebellious *Abſalom*, the pittifull ſobs and rufull lamentations of *Ieremias* for his ſinnefull people, may well be ſhaddows (& but ſhaddowes) of her griefe.

Thren. cap. 2.

Gen. 37. Iob. 10. 1. Reg. c. 20. 2. Reg. 18. & 19. Thren. per totū.

O ſacred Queen, in the mid-

deſt of theſe bitters ſtormes, ſhall I yet preſume to call thee beautifull? Me thinkes I heare thee ſay with mourneful *Noëmi*, *Nolite vocare me Noëmi, ſed vocate me Mara, quia amaritudinibus valde repleuit me Omnipotens*. Call me not *Noëmi*, that is to ſay *beautifull*, but call me *Mara*, that is *bitter*, becauſe the Almighty hath filled me abundantly with bitternes. *Ruth. 1.*

Another reaſon alſo may be why ſhe ſhould be compared to a bitter ſea. Becauſe as the Red ſea prooued moſt bitter vnto *Pharao* & his wicked army, miraculouſly withſtanding their paſſage, and hindring their purſuit to the great comfort & ſtrengthening of the children of God, and to their own vtter ruine and deſtruction: So this B. Queene is a ſea of bitternes

vnto

vnto the Diuell and his damned spirits (figured in that obstinate Tyrant & his impious followers) who like roaring lyons, neuer cease to persecute the chosen and beloued Children of God, seeking whome they may deuoure. In whose strong defence the powerfull Virgin is alwayes ready at hand, whose only Name is most terrible vnto them, and for these respects, she is most iustly intitled *amarum mare*, a bitter Sea.

3. Then lastly *Maria*, is as much as *Domina*, Lady, or Mistresse: & with great reason, for indeed she was euer Lady & Mistresse ouer all her actions, making alwayes her inward thoughts keep a most perfect cõcord with her outward deedes; and both the one and the other directly to tend to the grea-

ter honour and glory of God, the true and chiefeſt ſcope of all her vertuous endeauours.

Beſides, ſhe may be ſayd to be *Domina*, a Lady, a powerfull Princeſſe, or mighty Empreſſe, by reaſon of the great power and authority ſhe hath with her ſweet Sonne, to help and ſuccour ſinners, as moſt deuoutly S. *Bernard* doth acknowledg, when he ſayth *Amplectamur Mariæ veſtigia, & deuotiſſima ſupplicatione beatis illius pedibus prouoluamur: teneamus eam, nec dimittamus donec benedixerit nobis, potens eſt enim*. Let vs imbrace the ſacred footſtepps of Bleſſed Mary, and with moſt deuout ſupplication, let vs fall at her bleſſed feet, let vs take hold on her, and neuer let go, vntill ſhe vouchſafe to grace vs with her bleſſing, for

Bern. ſer. in Apoc. 12.

ſhe

he is powerfull.

Thus hauing ſomewhat diſ-
ouered the hidden treaſure wrap-
ed in this happy Name of *Mary*;
followeth that we ſtirr vp our
deſires and inflame our harts with
moſt feruerous deuotion and true
loue towardes ſo beautifull a La-
dy. What ſoule in danger of eter-
nall ſhipwracke, beaten with the
rough billowes of ſinne, & threat-
ned with the ſurging waues of in-
ſtant death, would not open his
deafe eares and hearing the com-
fortable voyce of S. *Bernard* giue
attentiue eare, whileſt he ſayth,
Reſpice ſtellam, voca Mariam, looke
vp man that art in perill, view this
beautifull Star, call vpon the bleſ-
ſed Name of *Mary*. What man ſo
wretched, who hauing crucifyed
her only Sonne by his manifold

The fruit of Meditation.

ſinnes

sinnes & grieuous offences, woul
not run to the foot of the Cros
where this sorrowfull Mothe
standeth, and weep floods of tea
for his misdemeanour, and by he
powerfull intercession obtayn
forgiuenes of them. What sinfu
wight in distresse and misery
would not fly vnto so powerfull
Lady, to obtaine new strength
greater forces whereby to maste
his vnbridled appetits, and ouer
come his disordered passions? F
nally who would not be seruan
to so mighty a Princesse? wh
would not be suppliant to so lo
uing a Mother, and wholy deuo
ted to so beautifull a Queene?

The Colloquium

Heerupon I wil in most hum
ble manner desire the glorio
Queen of heauen, that hencefort
by her motherly help I may soke

myn

myne eyes fixed vpon the bright
eames of her ſhining vertue, that
vtterly hate all workes of darke-
es, and ſo drown my ſoule in the
owing ſtreams of deuotion, that
may waſh away al the ſtaynes of
y former offences, and neuer
more offend Almighty God: yea
hat I may alwayes fly vnder her
rotection, & that ſhe wil vouch-
fe to guard and defend me; *Sub*
tuum præſidium confugimus ſancta
Dei genitrix, vnder thy protection
e flye, O holy Mother of God.
o conclude this Meditation,
t vs with a firme and reſolute
rpoſe dedicate our ſelues who-
vnto her, in all our neceſſityes
ue confident recourſe vnto her,
d to the beſt of our powers,
itate her excellent heroical ver-
es, as the moſt true token of

our

our loue, and moſt louely pledg
of our endles friendſhip. For the
better obteyning whereof, let v
heere deuoutly recite the *Salu*
Regina, or *Aue Maris Stella*
which in this place is more pro
per.

THE II. MEDITATION

Of the rare ſanctity of the Bleſſed Virgin.

THREE famous workes w
read to haue beene moſt curi
ouſly accompliſhed by the wi
King *Salomon* in the old Law
which if we conſider as types an
figures of what our true *Salom*
Chriſt Ieſus did afterward fullfi
in his bleſſed Mother, they wi
help vs ſomewhat to declare th

vnſpe

vnspeakable greatnes of the rare ſanctity of the holy mother of God vvhich is indeed ſo far beyond all humane reach, as the wits & beſt vnderſtandings muſt be forced with S. *Auguſtine* to cry out, *Quid dicam de te paupere ingenio?* What can be ſayd of thee by the weake wit of man? Where the high conceits of learned S. *Auguſtine* came ſhort; vvhere the golden eloquence of fluent S. *Chryſoſtome* vvas not inough; vvhere the graue ſentences of renovvned S. *Ambroſe* craue pardon; vvhere the famous vvorkes of learned S. *Hierome* confeſſe their weaknes; the piercing eye of enlightned *S. Anſelme* dazeleth; the hony-flowing ſtile of Holy S. *Bernard* is dryed vp; the deuout hart of ſeraphicall S. *Bonauenture* is conſumed; finally

where

where al the whole troope of worthy Writters doe acknowledge themselues vnable to declare thy vnspeakable prayse, I must needs say with S. *Augustine*: *Accipite itaq; quascumq; exiles, quascumq; meritis tuis impares, gratiarum actiones*, accept of these how euer so slender prayses, how euer so vnequall, vnto thy worthy merits.

Serm. 18. de Sanctis.

1. The first worke of this forenamed King, registred in holy Writ, is the building of the famous Temple of *Ierusalem*, which both for great cost and excellent workmanship may well be accoũted the Mirrour of all Ages, an earthly Heauen, where God himselfe chose to dwell, and of the which we read, *Nihil erat quod non auro tegeretur*, there was nothing that was not couered with gold

3. Reg. 2. 6.

gold. If now we turne our eyes to the ſacred Temple of the Sonne of God, to the diuine Tabernacle of the Holy Ghoſt, and ſecret cloſet of the bleſſed Trinity, the humble Virgin *Mary*, we ſhal find her a worke beyond all admiration; wrought by the eternall Wiſedom of Almighty God; adorned with all kind of vertue; enriched with aboundance of diuine grace, and prepared as an vnſpotted veyle, wherein God himſelfe ſhould be inwrapped, that ſo indeed ſhe might become the ſacred Temple of God, ſo enlightned with grace, ſo inflamed with Charity, that al the world might ſee & beare witnes, that *Nihil erat quod non auro tegeretur*, there was nothing in her, that was not couered with golden Charity. Neither was the

famous Temple of *Hieruſalem*, euer ſo frequented as is this Holy Temple of God, becauſe as S. *Bernard* witneſſeth, *omnibus ſinum miſericordiæ aperit, vt de plenitudine eius accipiant vniuerſi*: She layeth open her merciſull breaſt vnto all, that of her great abounndance euery one may take part.

2. The ſecond worke of admiration recorded in the holy Scripture, we find to be a ſtately Pallace that King *Salomon* erected for his owne vſe. And this was finiſhed by him, and brought to full perfection in thirteen yeares. But Wiſedome it ſelfe built the houſe of which we heere ſpeake, and for himſelfe, *Sapientia ædificauit ſibi domum*, Wiſedome built himſelfe a houſe, of which the Prophet *Iſay* ſpake when he ſayd: *Erit præpara-*

tus mons domus Domini in vertice
montium: There ſhallbe a moun-
tain prepared for the houſe of our
Lord in the top of Mountaynes.
Which words S. *Gregory* the great
expoundeth of the Bleſſed Virgin
thus: *An non mons ſublimis Maria,*
quæ vt conceptionem æterni verbi at- in Reg. 1.
tingeret, meritorum verticē vſq; ad
ſolium Deitatis erexit: Is not this
Virgin a high & lofty mountayn,
who to reach to the Conception
of the Sonne of God ſhe rayſed the
height of her merits aboue the
quirs of Angels vnto the thron of
God. And as by the mountaine is
ſignifyed *Perfection*, ſhe being pla
ced in the top of mountaynes, gi-
veth vs to vnderſtand of how
great perfection and rare ſanctity
he was, & is aboue al other Saints
and Angels: and all this the diuin

Wiſedome had brought to paſſe in the ſpace of thirteene yeares; for ſhe was not full fourteene, when ſhe was choſen the Mother of God.

Behold then, O my ſoule, this ſtately Pallace, aſcend this holy mountaine, admire the diuine workemanſhip of all, and euery part of this famous building, and thou wilt be forced to ſay *Digitus Dei eſt hic*, this worke could only be done by the finger of God. *Exod. 8.*

The third worke of fame mentioned in Holy Writ, was a ſtately Throne, which King *Salomon* built for himſelfe, & wherein he gloryed very much, of which the holy Scripture auerreth: *Non eſt factum tale opus in vniuerſis regnis*: The like peece of worke was not made in the vvorld:

was of Iuory, couered with the beſt gold; it was beſet with princely Lyons in diuers places, and there were ſix ſteps to aſcend vnto it. By the Iuory Throne couered with beaten gold is ſignifyed the Bleſſed Virgin, by reaſon of her chaſt purity, and the moſt beautifull luſtre of her golden Charity. The ſix ſtepps ſignify ſix vertuous acts, by which we muſt aſcend into the Bleſſed Virgins fauour, ſignifyed by theſe Letters of her venerable Name *Mirjám*, for *Sochath*, the Hebrew word. The ſtepps be theſe; *Magnanimity*, *Inuocation*, *Reuerence*, *Imitation*, *Affection*, and *Memory* of her. *Magnanimity* bringeth forth a firme & conſtant *Reſolution* to be truly hers. *Inuocation*, calleth vnto her for ayde and ſuccour, for the

better performance of this good purpose. *Reuerense* causeth a desire of *Imitation*. *Imitation* breeds loue and affection. *Affection* keepes a perpetuall memory of what we loue: & *Memory* is both a watchfull aduiser of what we haue promised, and a certaine Note-booke of what we haue receaued.

These be the shaddows which may in some sort giue vs to vnderstand the admirable sanctity of the euer Blessed Queen of Angels and holy Mother of sinners. For greater was the Sanctity of this excellent Virgin, then the sanctity of all Saints and Angells, iointly conceaued, as both Fathers, and Deuines do auerre. *Ceteris per partes, Mariæ autem se infudit tota gratiæ plenitudo*, sayth *S Hierome*: To other Saints grace was giuen by

parts, but to this ſacred Queene, all fullnes of grace was at once infuſed. And therefore moſt worthily ſhe was ſaluted by the Angel when he brought his heauenly Embaſſage *Gratia plena*, full of grace, that of her fulines (as before I ſayd out of S. *Bernard*) we might all participate. *Luc. 1.*

Hauing thus by theſe three conſiderations grafted in our harts and minds the vnſpeakable greatnes of her imcomparable ſanctity and fullnes of grace, it reſteth that as little children & tender Infants we haue recourſe vnto her, who is louing, and therfore will not deny vs; who is our Mother, and therefore cannot be forgetfull of her poore diſtreſſed children, who with true deuotion ſeeke her. Let vs therefore cry, and call, *Sancta*

Maria ora pro nobis, Holy Mary pray for vs. *Monstra te esse Matrem*, shew thy selfe a Mother. And the better to incline her louing hart, that she may shew her selfe a carefull Mother, let vs shew our selues true & obedient children, giuing attentiue eare vnto the diuine sentence, and healthfull counsell of S. Peter: *Quasi modo geniti infantes rationabiles, sine dolo, lac concupiscite*. As new borne children reasonable, without deceipt, desire yee milke: not sweet alluring milke of vayne pleasure & worldly vanityes, but the true nourishing milke of a pure & vnspotted life; the delightsome milke of deuout loue to the B. Virgin, in which we may increase vnto eternall happines.

All haile, O sacred Virgin,

full

full of grace the Mirrour of San- *Collo-quium.*
ctity, and patterne of all perfecti-
on: Behould I moſt vnworthy of
al thy Children do heer proſtrate
my ſelfe at thy feet, deſiring from
the bottome of my hart that thou
wilt vouchſafe to take me vnder
thy protection, and with the a-
bundance of thy gracious fauours
ſo to enrich my needy ſoule, that
it may be gratefull vnto thy belo-
ued Sonne, & pleaſing vnto thee.
And being honored with ſo great
and high a Title as to be called
Thyne, I may endeauour to the vt-
termoſt of my power ſo to behaue
my ſelfe, that I may in all my acti-
ons ſhevv my ſelfe a true child of
ſuch a Mother. Amen. *Salue Re-*
gina.

THE III. MEDITATION.

Sancta Dei genitrix ora pro nobis.

Holy Mother of God, pray for vs.

THIS most excellent Title of Mother of God is giuen to the Blessed Virgin, by the holy Euangelists in diuers places. S. *Matthew* recounting the genealogy of our Lord and Sauiour Iesus Christ, deriueth it from *Abraham*, and bringeth it to *S. Ioseph*, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin, *De qua natus est Iesus, qui vocatur Christus*: of whome was borne Iesus who is called Christ. S *Iohn* speaking of the wedding in *Cana* of *Galilee*, sayth: *Erat mater Iesu ibi*, The Mother of Iesus was there. An

at the death of our Blessed Saviour making mention of her constant fortitude at the foot of the Crosse writeth: *Stabat iuxta Crucem I. ſu Mater eius*: Iesus his Mother stood at the foot of the Crosse. In the Acts of the Apostles, S *Luke* also honoureth her with the same renowned title of the *Mother of God*, all which being inuincible testimonyes need no further proofe.

1. First then, I wil consider how this excellent title of *Mother of God*, is the chiefe ground & foundation of all her rare, and singular prerogatiues. Why should this heauenly Queen be called, and be both Mother & Virgin? Because so it was fit for the B. Mother of God. Wherefore preserued from all spot, both of actuall and originall sinne? Because she was the B

Mother of God. Why repleniſhed with grace aboue all other Creatures? For the ſame reaſon that ſhe was Mother of God. Why more Holy then all Saints & Angells togeather? Becauſe ſuch ſanctity was agreable to the renowned title of Mother of God. She was elected the deuine Tabernacle of the moſt Higheſt, *Et ſanctificauit Tabernaculum ſuũ altiſſimus*, & thus he ſanctifyed his holy Tabernacle. This moſt noble Title therefore being giuen her, by reaſon of her profound humility, the ground of all vertues, was the beginning of all the reſt her ſingular fauours.

2. But to diue a litle further into botomles depth of this matchleſſe Title; let vs conſider the greatnes therof. If there could be

found

found some noble Lady on earth, whose Father should excell all the world in power, riches and authority; whose Sonne did go beyond all creatures in wisedome, wealth, and nobility; and lastly whose Spouse did equall them both in all noble acts and vertuous proceedings: if such a Lady could be found for her singular vertues and rare qualityes, worthy to be acknowledged of such a Father, to be honoured by such a Sonne, and to be beloued of such a Spouse; what titles could this gracious Queene be honoured with, but such as both by Father, Sonne, & Spouse must needs be excellent? Consider then the euer Blessed & most happy Virgin *Mary*, daughter vnto Almighty God, Mother to his only Sonne, and Espoused

to the Holy Ghoſt; who for her profound humility, Angelicall chaſtity, moſt burning Charity, and the reſt of her admirable vertues, is moſt worthily and tenderly beloued of them all. And ſhall we not thinke they would honour her with ſuch a title, as might both anſwere the greatnesof them that gaue it, and be moſt honourable to her that ſhould receaue it? Yea doubtleſſe. And vvhat title could this be but, *Sancta Dei Genitrix*, Holy Mother of God, *Mater Ieſu*, Mother of Ieſus.

3. I will then conſider the great dignity of this moſt noble Title. For the better vnderſtāding wher of we may contemplate how the Eternal Wiſedome of God th Father, the ſecond perſon of the Trinity, was from all Eterni

born

borne of his Father without a Mother, and at the decreed tyme being to be borne of a Mother without a Father, he made choiſe of the Bleſſed Virgin, which was the greateſt dignity which any creature could be exalted vnto; as this ſacred Queene did moſt humbly acknowledge and prayſe God for the ſame, in her diuine Canticle, when ſhe did alſo propheſy how for his cauſe all people ſhould call her *Bleſſed*: *Ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent omnes generationes*: Behold from henceforth all generations ſhall call me Bleſſed. Therefore moſt worthily this honourable title is placed in the beginning of her Letanyes, as the chiefe ground of all the reſt of her noble & deuout appellations. This I ſay in the beginning, as the greateſt

and

and moſt worthy to be engrafted in the harts of all ſuch as deſire to come vnto her, for the ſweet milk of true & cordiall deuotion. And as little Infants neuer ceaſe crying and calling after their Mothers, or Nurſes, vntill they ſee them; and neuer content vntill they come to ſucke the full duggs, and imbrace the paps from whence they draw their ſuſtenance: So ought we to cry after this our louing Mother, and thinke our ſelues and ſoule robbed vntill we both find her, & taſt the ſweet milke of deuotion, of which S. *Auguſtine* ſpake, whe imagining himſelfe betweene th ſacred wounds of Chriſt, and th full duggs of the B. Virgin, h ſayd: *hinc paſcor à vulnere, hinc lactor ab vbere*. On the one ſide I a fed with the precious bloud

Chri

Christ, on the other with the deuotion-flowing teats of the Blessed Virgin; of which two dainties *S. Bonauenture* also gloryed, and sayd he made himself a most sweet potion.

O euer Blessed, and most happy Mother of God, who notwithstanding so great a Title, and high dignity, dost not disdaine to be the Mother of sinners; vouchsafe to cast thy humble eye vpon a desolate and forsaken Orphane, who cryeth with the Kingly Prophet: *Tibi derelictus est pauper; orphano tu es adiutrix*: Vnto thee the poore is left, and thou wilt be a help vnto the Orphane: *Ad te suspiramus gementes & flentes in hac lachrymarum valle. Eia ergo aduocata nostra, illos tuos misericordes oculos ad nos conuerte.* Vnto thee, O sacred Queen *Colloquium.*

we crye, groaning and lamenting in this vale of miseryes. Come therfore, O most Blessed aduocate turne thy mercifull eyes towards vs, heare our humble pititions, *Sancta Dei genitrix ora pro nobis*: holy Mother of God pray for vs, that we may escape the manifold dangers of this wicked life; that we may follow thy diuine and humble footsteps; that we may not only in word and hart acknowledge thee the Mother of God, but also come to behould thy glorious Crowne, which thou hast receaued, answerable to so worthy a Title and so great a dignity. And that so we may reioyce with thee for all eternity, Amen. *Salue Regina &c.*

THE

THE IIII. MEDITATION.

Sancta Virgo Virginum, ora pro nobis.

Holy Virgin of Virgins, pray for vs.

CONCERNING this *Epitheton*, we may cõsider three principal points. First the dignity of Virginity. Secondly why the Blessed Virgin, is called *Virgo Virginum*, Virgin of Virgins. Lastly of what esteeme virginity is with God, and our B. Lady.

1. The first consideration of the excellency of Virginity, we find expressed & counselled by Christ, when in the mysticall parable of the three kindes of Eunuches, the last, sayth he, are such as haue made themselues chast, for the *Mat. 19.*

kingdom of heauen: and to ſhew
Matt.19. the difficulty in attaining to this
excellent vertue, he addeth, *Qui*
Luke 18. *poteſt capere, capiat*: he that can
reach vnto it, let him imbrace and
follow it. The like proofe we
haue of the dignity of virginall
chaſtity, out of another parable,
where Chriſt comparing his holy
Church to a good land, whereof
Cypr. de hab. virg. Hier. l. 1. in Iou. Auguſt. de ſancta virg. c. 44. & 45. one part yealdeth fruit thirty fold,
another ſixty, and ſome an hun-
dred: vnderſtanding heereby, as
ſome Fathers expound, the cha-
ſtity of honeſt wiues, deuout wi-
dowes, and vertuous Virgins; a-
mongſt vvhich, as the chiefeſt,
Virginity bringeth forth an hun-
dred fold. S. *Paul* alſo much ex-
1. Cor. 7. tolleth the quiet condition of vir-
ginall life, becauſe as it is more
free from troubles and vexations

of

of the fleſh, ſo it is an eſtate more ſequeſtred from earthly pleaſures, and therefore more fit for the ſeruice of God.

Moreouer the excellency of this celeſtiall gift may be gathered out of the common and continual practiſe of the Church, and the high eſteeme the holy Fathers euer had of this ſo pretious a iewel. S. *Ambroſe* calleth it *Principalis virtus*, the chiefeſt vertue, adding that no vvit is able to comprehend the dignity thereof, becauſe it exceeds the bondes of Nature, pierceth the clouds, paſſeth aboue the Stars, goeth beyond the quires of Angels, and taketh the Sonne of God for Spouſe. S. *Cyprian* calleth virginity, the flowre of the Church, the grace, and ornament of ſpirituall fauour, the liuely i-

Lib. 2. de Virg.

De diſc. & habit. Virg.

mage of our Sauiour, deciphring his ſanctity, and the more illuſtrious portion of the Church and flock of Chriſt. I omit others, for by theſe we may ſufficiently vnderſtand the excellency & dignity of virginity conſidered in it ſelfe.

2. Conſider why, & with how great reaſon the B. Mother of God is called *Virgin of Virgins*. Where we may contemplate, how this ſacred Queene was the firſt, that euer offered her virginity to God by Holy Vow; and this either in the Temple at her Preſentation being of three years of age, where ſhe was brought vp vntil by diuin ordination ſhe was eſpouſed to S. *Ioſeph*: or, as ſome thinke, ſhe made this laudable vow (being preuented with the vſe of reaſon) in her Mothers wombe. Howſo-

euer it was. all with vniforme cõ-ſent agree that in this ſhe was the firſt, and therfore, moſt worthily intitled the *Virgin of Virgins*.

Beſides, ſhe may moſt iuſtly be named *Virgin of Virgins*, becauſe in her vnſpotted life ſhe was the moſt perfect modell of all vertues, the moſt exact patterne of virginity, & the moſt liuely example for all Virgins, whereby to frame their actions, and ſome their liues, as S. *Ambroſe* witneſſeth: *Sit vobis* (ſayth he) *tamquam in imagine deſcripta virginitas, vitaq; Beatæ Mariæ; de qua velut in ſpeculo reſulget ſpecies Caſtitatis, & forma virtutis*. Let the virginity, and life of the Bleſſed Virgin *Mary* be vnto you as it were engrauen in an image, from which as in a lookinglaſſe the beames of Chaſtity, and the *Ambr. l. 2. de Virg.*

forme of vertue do yeald a moſt beautifull luſtre . For heere you ſhall find , both what to fly , and what to follow. And furthermore to ſtir vp in our harts an earneſt deſire to learne of ſuch a Miſtreſſe to follow ſuch a guide , and leuell our liues to ſuch a rule , he ſetteth forth her vertue and nobility as followeth : *Primus diſcendi ardor , nobilitas eſt magiſtri* , the firſt and chiefeſt motiue of the deſyre of learning , is the nobility of the maiſter: then further: *Quid nobiliùs Dei matre , quid ſplendidiùs ea quam ſplendor elegit ?* What more noble then the Mother of God , what more bright then ſhe whome brightnes hath elected and choſen for his Mother ? She therefore for nobility deſerues the Title of Miſtreſſe , and for her bright ſhining

vertue worthy the moſt exact patterne of all perfection.

Againe ſhe may be ſayd to be the *Virgin of Virgins*, becauſe vnto the honour of her virginity was ioyned the fruitfulneſſe of a Mother, neuer the like heard of before, neuer the like hoped for hereafter: *Virgo perpetua, mater & Virgo* (ſayth *S. Hierome*) a perpetuall Virgin and Mother, or Virgin-Mother, and therfore *Mother of Virgins*, and *Virgin of Virgins*. This is the Eaſterne gate (as *S. Hierom* expoūdeth) alwayes ſhut, alwayes ſhining, mentioned by the Prophet *Ezechiel*, graced with the Title of Mother, yet without detriment or hurt of her vnſpotted virginity, alwayes remayning a Virgin: therfore we ought to call vpon her, and earneſtly to

cry vnto her, *Sancta virgo Virginũ ora pro nobis*. Holy Virgin of Virgins, pray for vs.

3. The third point may be to conſider, how gratefull this vertue is in the ſight of God, and how pleaſing vnto the Bleſſed Virgin. So highly eſteemed in the ſight of God, that being to effect one miraculous work, that ſhould be the wonder of the world, that is, to wrap himſelfe in the ſlender veyle of our humanity, & become man amongſt men; he would not take that mantle, but of a Virgin, and a Virgin dedicated vnto himſelfe by a perpetuall vow of chaſtity: *Virginitate placuit, Humilitate concepit*, ſayth S. *Bernard*: By virginity ſhe ſeemed pleaſing vnto him, and by Humility ſhe became his Mother, or (as S. *Chryſoſtom* ſaith

by

by Chaſtity. This is that Altar of Perfumes, called *Altare Thymiamatis*, ſo pleaſing vnto God. This is that dainty Roſe of *Saron* ſpringing from the pricky thornes of mortification: this that beautifull lylly of the humble vallies, which admitteth not the leaſt touch or ſtain: it is that floriſhing flower of the field, which being roted in the B. virgin, hath now ſprouted forth ſo many branches, that we may wel ſee and ſay, *Flores apparuerunt in terra noſtra*: Flowers haue appeared in our Land; and being virginall flowers, and flowers of virginity, *Adducentur Regi virgines poſt eam*: After her, troops of virgens ſhall be brought to the King of Kinges, to Chriſt the true Spouſe of holy Virgins. For, *Oleum effuſum nomen tuum ideo Adoleſ-*

cen-

centulæ dilexerunt te. Thy name, O Lord, is oyle powred out, therefore young virgins loue thee, and following thy diuine steps they cry: *In odorem vnguentorum tuorũ curremus*: We will runne after the sweet smell of thy pretious oyntements.

Virginity must also be most pleasing to the B. Virgin: for she knowing best the valew of such dainty flowers, and considering how much they are esteemed by her sweet Sonne, must needs haue a particuler loue therto, and a peculiar care therof that such choice flowers be not defiled, or trampled on by incursiõ of bruit beasts. And as one that is the first founder of some holy & Religious Order, hath a most diligent care both to defend & aduance his religious

Inſtitute, and taketh great delight in the increaſe and progreſſe ther-of: ſo the B Virgin being the firſt that euer found out this Angeli-call life, the firſt that layd the ground and foundation of vowed Chaſtity, the firſt that diſplayd the banner, vnder which all chaſt virgins ought manfully to fight, & vnder which ſo many haue al-ready winne the goale, gotten the victory, and worne the Crowne: She, I ſay, muſt needs take great delight in the groth of theſe ſo faire flowers of her louing Sonne, as he takes great content in gathe-ring of them. Witnes thoſe beau-tifull flowers of virginity & con-ſtant pillars of renowned Chaſti-ty, tranſplanted by our Sauiours hand from this garden of miſery into the heauenly place of Paradiſe

S. *Catherine*, S. *Agatha*, S. *Lucy*, S. *Agnes*, S. *Cecily*, S. *Winifride*, and thousands more in like manner, who rather made choice to loose their liues, then liue to be depriued of so rare a Iewel, and with the vnspoted *Ermyn* seemed rather to dye then be defiled.

And thus hauing viewed the excellency of Virginity in it selfe, the esteeme it hath in the sight of God, the prize it beares with the Blessed Virgin: and considering how truly she is *Virgin of Virgins*; let vs stir vp in our selues a reuerend loue vnto this excellent vertue, and desire this Virgin of Virgins to pray for vs, that we may euery one in his estate, and according to his calling imitate this glorious Virgin, in keeping our soules and bodyes as the chast vessels

els and choſen tabernacles of the Holy Ghoſt, bringing forth fruit, ſome thirty, ſome ſixty, and ſome an hundred fold, whereby we ſhall be moſt pleaſing to God, beloued of the B. Virgin, and ſhall be of the happy number of that elect band, of ſo many thouſands of moſt holy & vnſpotted virgins whoſe priuiledge is to follow the Lambe whereſouer, and whithersoeuer he goeth: to which effect let vs ſay, *Aue Maris ſtella &c.*

THE V. MEDITATION.

Mater Chriſti, ora pro nobis.
Mother of Chriſt, pray for vs.

HAVING contemplated the excellent dignity of the Holy Mother of God, let vs now con-

ſider her as *Mother of Chriſt*, which although it be the ſame in effect, yet heere we will ponder ſome particuler points, as it were deriued from this word *Chriſt*, wherby it may the better appeare what dignity hath redounded to the B. Virgin by being called *Mother of Chriſt*. Chriſt therfore, is as much to ſay, as *Annointed*, becauſe he was indeed the annointed of his Father, *Vnxit te Deus, Deus tuus*, O God, thy God hath annointed thee, and that *Oleo lætitiæ præ conſortibus tuis*, with oyle of gladnes aboue thy fellowes. By which diuin vnction is ſignifyed the abundance of heauenly grace, wherewith the ſacred Humanity of Chriſt was beautifyed aboue al others.

Prieſts, Prophets and Kings

are wont to be annoynted, to ſignify the particuler grace which they haue giuen them to perform their functions: and Chriſt Ieſus being both Prieſt, Prophet, and King, ought by al titles to be *Chriſt* that is *Annoynted*, ſo that by Chriſt we vnderſtand as it were the flowing fountain of all graces, from whoſe fullnes we al receaue to ſatisfy our wants. Now if we ſeeke the head of this diuine fountaine, we ſhal find it hath one beginning in heauen from all eternity of his Father, another on earth *in fine temporum*, towards the end of the world, when being made Man he came to pay the ranſome of our ſinnes, and that is his bleſſed Mother, heere iuſtly intitled *Mater Chriſti*, Mother of Chriſt.

Homo in fine temporum.

Let vs now conſider foure

propertyes of oyle, which will in ſome ſort declare vnto vs the wonderfull effects of this diuine oyle, whereby the greatnes of the benefit we haue receaued of the B. Virgin (who was Mother vnto this Annoynted Sonne of God, and brought him into this world among vs) may appeare the more.

The firſt property of Oyle is to feed vs, and this S. *Bernard* noteth, and experience teacheth, & Chriſt is he who is our true food, without whom no ſoule can liue; for vnles we eate his fleſh, and drink his bloud, we cannot auoyd eternall death. The *Iſraelites* in the deſert were cloyed with the heauenly *Manna*, and ſayd, they vvere vveary of ſo light meates; therefore by the povverfull hand of Almighty God they vvere ſoa-

rely chaſtized with fiery Serpents, the ſtinging wherof could not be cured, but by the beholding of the brazen ſerpent: So if we be cloyed with this diuine food, vvhich the Bleſſed Virgin hath brought vnto vs; what can we expect but the annoyance and bytyng of fiery ſerpẽts, that is of vnruly paſſions, diſordered, and diſordinate luſtes of the fleſh, neuer ceaſing to afflict vs vntil we caſt our eyes vp on our B. Sauiour nayled to the Croſſe, figured in the brazen ſerpent; vvhich if we do vvith true deuotion, firme fayth, and harty repentance of our ſinnes, we ſhall be cured, and our ſoule ſhall find it ſelfe refreſhed vvith the oyle of gladenes; for as S. *Auguſtine* ſayth: *de peccato dolet, & de dolore gaudet*, a ſinner grieueth for the ſinne com-

mitted, & reioyceth that he is ſorrowfull for it.

The ſecond property gathered out of the ſame *S. Bernard* is, that it giueth light: and as Chriſt himſelfe auerreth, he is the light of the world, *Lux ſum mũdi*: I am the light of the world: therfore whoſoeuer findeth himſelfe oppreſſed with the darke cloudes of dull ignorance, let him haue recourſe vnto this diuine lampe of burning oyle; and let him with the blind man call vpon him and ſay, *Lord haue mercy on me*: & if moſt bountiful Ieſus ſhal demand what thou wouldſt haue? Thou ſhalt anſwere *Lord, that I may ſee light*. What light? The light of thy celeſtiall doctrine, of thy heauenly grace, of thy eternall glory.

Another property of oyle is

to cure wounds, as the ſame Holy Saint recordeth, of which we haue an euident proofe out of the parable of the miſerable man, who deſcending from *Hieruſalem* to *Hierico*, fell into the handes of theeues, & being ſore wounded, was cured by oyle and wine. The precious bloud of Chriſt, is the medicinable oyle powred forth for the cure of our ſoules, & ſalue of our ſoars; this muſt be the only remedy of our bleeding wounds.

The laſt property of oyle is (as S. *Gregory* writeth) to ſwim aboue all other liquors, which is the true effect of the grace of Chriſt, to make them who are indued therewith to ſwim aboue al waters of tribulation; and though for a tyme they may ſeeme to be caſt down, becauſe we ſee them

encountred with ſo many changes and chances; yet they will come vp to their naturall place againe, & like the flouriſhing palme grow the faſter vnder the greateſt burden, for that is to floriſh like the palme, as the Kingly Prophet writeth, *Iuſtus vt palma florebit*.

Theſe are the foure excellent propertyes of oyle which do ſhew vnto vs the admirable cures that Chriſt by his diuine grace vvorketh in our ſoules. And the Bleſſed Virgin being called *Mother of Chriſt*, if we vvant food to our ſoules, we muſt call to her, that ſhe would vouchſafe to pray vnto her moſt louing Sonne to feed vs. If we be deſtitute of light, that ſhe vvould intreate him to enlighten vs. If we be wounded, that ſhe would deſire him to cure vs. If we

be oppreſſed & ready to be drovvned in thedepth of miſery, that ſhe vvould by her Motherly interceſſion pray him to releeue vs vvith his mercy, that we faile not in his cauſe, but like vnto oyle, alwayes ſtriue to aſcend, that ſo we may ſhew our ſelues to haue participation of that diuine oyle Chriſt, vnto whoſe euer Bleſſed Mother we muſt haue recourſe, ſaying: *Mater Chriſti ora pro nobis*, Mother of Chriſt pray for vs.

THE VI. MEDITATION.

Mater diuinæ gratiæ, ora pro nobis.

Mother of diuine grace, pray for vs.

THIS Diuine Title may be giuen to the Bleſſed Virgin

for three reaſons, which yeald vs three deuout points of Meditation.

1. The firſt reaſon why ſhe is called *Mother of diuine grace*, is, becauſe ſhe is the mother of Chriſt who is the author of all graces, and fauours, and repleniſhed with ſuch aboundance of grace, that not vnfitly he may be called *Grace* it ſelfe, whoſe Bleſſed Mother was the Queene of Angells, of whom we ſpeake, and therefore moſt rightly intitled *Mother of Diuine grace*. For if we conſider the menifold benefits which we haue receaued from our Sauiour by his comming amongſt vs, and the aboundance of gracewe may draw from the Holy Sacraments, which he hath left as fountaines cõtinually flowing like the ſeauen-hea-

ded *Nilus*, to which we may run at our pleaſure, to refreſh our needy and thirſty ſoules: Theſe things I ſay, conſidered, & how he choſe the Bleſſed Virgin to be the long deſired ſhip, that could bring vs in, to our hauen at once ſuch a precious Iewel, as might not only ſupply al our wants, but alſo make vs exceeding rich; we may with great reaſon ſay, *Mother of diuine grace, pray for vs.*

2. The ſecond reaſon of this noble Title is, becauſe of the great aboundance of ſpirituall graces, wherewith this ſacred Queen was endowed, as partly we haue ſayd in the former Meditations, and after ſhall more playnely appeare. She was ſaluted by the heauenly Embaſſadour *Gratia plena*, or as the Greeke word imports *Singu-* κεχαριτωμένη.

larly gracious, becaule by reaſon of her great merits, ſhe was aboue all creatures pleaſing vnto God, and for this great aboundance of grace produced in her bleſſed ſoule, partly, by the gift of God, and partly by her owne cooperating thereto, ſhe may fitly be called *Mother of Diuine grace*.

And if we conſider with attention how this grace did increaſe in the Bleſſed Virgin, we cannot chooſe, but acknowledge her to be the *Mother of diuine grace*. For as many Deuines affirme, the B. Virgin by euery act doubled the grace ſhe had before receaued and this for the ſpace of all her life which was 72. yeares (as the beſt Writers do proue) vvhereby in the end of her life the grace wherwith ſhe was indued, vvas almoſt

infinite, & far ſurpaſſeth the weak reach of humane reaſon tovnfold. How rightly then do vve call her, *Mother of diuine grace?*

3. The third reaſon of this appellation is, becauſe ſhe is a perpetual Aduocate for vs vnto her beloued Sonne, & doth by her holy interceſſion obtaine grace & pardon for our ſins. For as S. *Bernard* deuoutly writeth, *Quidquid nos habere voluit, id per Mariam tranſire diſpoſuit:* Whatſoeuer God would haue vs to receaue, that vvould he haue to paſſe through the handes of the Bleſſed Virgin. And for this cauſe ſhe is ſayd to be as it vvere the *Necke*, & *Throat* of the Church and Chriſt the *Head*. And as all that maintaynes the body, paſſeth from the head through the Throat to the chiefe parts of the body frō

the

the which it is duely distributed to all the rest of the members: so all that commeth from Christ vnto his Spouse the Church, he will haue to passe through the sacred handes of the Blessed Virgin, vnto the whole body, & euery member of the Holy Church: & therfore we say, *Mater diuinæ gratiæ, ora pro nobis*, Mother of diuine grace pray for vs.

Colloquium.

O happy Mother of diuine grace, who by thy profound humility, vnspotted chastity, vnspeakable charity, and the rest of thy excellent vertues, didst bring into the world the author of grace & wast thy selfe repleniſhed with all fullnes therof, and art as a perpetuall conduct to conuay his diuine fauours vnto vs; let vs so be strengthned by thy diuine fauour

and holy intercession, that we may in such sort shew our selues true children of diuine grace, that thou maist not refuse to be our Mother, or deny vs to be thy children; but according to thy Name, as thou art called *Mother of mercy*, for the loue thou shewest vnto repentant sinners; so also shew thy selfe *Mother of diuine grace*, in obtayning for vs some portion of that celestiall gift which may make vs truly heyrs of that eternal Kingdom, of which this diuine grace is the only pledge, and surest warrant. Amen. *Aue Maria*.

THE

THE VII. MEDITATION.

Mater purissima, ora pro nobis.

Most pure Mother, pray for vs.

IN this Title of Purity we will not speake of the Virginall purity of the Queene of heauen, of which we haue sayd somewhat already in the Title of *Virgin of Virgins*, and shall adde more in the Meditations following: but we will now speake of the vnspotted Purity of the B. Virgin, from the blemish and staine of sinne.

1. First therefore we may consider, how free this B. Virgin did alwayes keep her selfe from the foule and vgly blot of all mortall sinne. Our first Mother *Eue* vvas called the *Mother of the liuing*, but was indeed Mother of the dead;

for

for being ſeduced and ſubdued by the ſerpents ſubtilty, ſhe intiſed & deceaued *Adam* to ſinne alſo, by whoſe diſobedience we all remayned ſubiect not only to death, but alſo vnto thouſands of miſeryes. But the B. Virgin, *mutans Euæ nomen*, changing the name of *Eue*, did alwayes remayne vnited with God, and ſo cruſhed and bruized the Serpents head, that withal his crafty guiles and ſubtile trickes he could neuer ſupplant this gracious Queene, to giue but the leaſt conſent vnto any vnlawfull act, or to ſpeake any hurtfull word, or haue the leaſt thought that might tend vnto any mortall ſinne: but ſhe alwayes kept her ſelfe moſt pure in thought, vvord, and deed, and therefore moſt vvorthily deſerues the ſhining Title of moſt *Pure* and

Vnſpot-

Vnſpotted; giuing vs alſo courage when the foule moniſter and enemy of mankind ſhall aſſault vs, to caſt our eyes vpon her, and ſay, *Mater puriſſima, ora pro nobis*, moſt pure Mother pray for vs. For the Diuell being exceſſiue proud, and inſolent, and hauing beene conquered and foyled by this glorious Queene, he dares not ſtay at the inuocation of her ſacred Name, nor can he endure to heare vs call for her ſoueraigne ayde and aſſiſtance, vvho is moſt pure, and moſt ready to help all thoſe vvho truely call vpon her.

2. The ſecond poynt yealdeth vs matter to meditate and ponder, how this pure and vnſpotted Virgin-Mother, did not only keep her ſelfe free from all tainture of mortall ſinne, but did alſo auoyd the

leaſt

leaſt blemiſh of any venial ſinne, into which ordinarily euen the moſt Iuſt do fall, and that many tymes a day, as holy Writ doth witnes in theſe words: *Septies in die cadit iuſtus, & reſurgit*: ſeauen tymes a day the iuſt man doth fal, & riſe againe, which is to be vnderſtood of ſmal ſinnes, and light offences. Neither are they tearmed light, becauſe we do careleſly commit them, or make light of them (for one of them ought not to be committed to ſaue the whole world) but they be ſo called, becauſe they be of their own nature ſuch, as they do not extinguiſh the grace of God in the Iuſt man, nor are directly againſt Charity, & therefore may ſtand both with grace and charity, and may the eaſier be forgiuen. Yet I ſay from

the little blemiſhes that taint euen the beſt, this B. Virgin was alwayes free, euer ſo perfectly vnited with Almighty God, and ſo wholy imployed in his diuine ſeruice, that the leaſt blaſt of any venial ſinne, could neuer ſtayne the flouriſhing beauty of her excellent vertues. This conſideration made S. *Auguſtine* ſay, *Cùm de peccatis agitur, nolo de B. Virgine mentionem fieri,* When there is any ſpeach of ſinne, I will haue no mention made of the B. Virgin; for right well he knew how free ſhe was, not only from the deadly wounds of mortall ſinne, but alſo from the leaſt ſhaddow of any veniall ſinne, and therefore moſt pure and worthyly called vpon by that Title, *Moſt pure Mother, pray for vs.*

Aug. l. de natur. & grat. cap. 36.

3. The third point is to contemplate the vndefiled purity of the B. Virgin, euen from the generall ſpot of originall ſinne, vnto which all the children of *Adam* were ſubiect, if they deſcended by naturall propagation, as this ſacred Queene did; yet by particular priuiledge was ſhe excepted from that generall law. For the infinite wiſedome of Almighty God did not thinke it fit that ſhe who was choſen from all eternity to be the Mother vnto his only Sonne, ſhould euer be ſayd to haue been in the power of Sathan. And therfore with his particular grace did preuent the effect of the general curſe, whereby our moſt pure Mother did remaine moſt beautifull in the ſight of God, pleaſing vnto his Sonne; and euen from

her first beginning, in her immaculate Conception, espoused vnto the Holy Ghost by heauenly grace. And by this indeed the Title of *Most pure* doth fitly agree vnto her. For we may say she was pure in that she fled all mortal sin; yet more pure in that no veniall sinne could euer taint her; but in this most pure, that euen from the spot of originall sinne she was preserued, and by singular fauour exempted from that curse, as indeed befitted the chosen Mother of God.

Colloquium.

O most pure, and vnspotted Mother, cast thy diuin eyes vpon thy deuout seruants, and let not the impurity of our former sins, defile vs. We must all confesse, we are conceaued the children of wrath, and borne in wickednes

by originall ſinne; yet, *Mater puriſsima ora pro nobis*, moſt pure Mother, pray for vs: That as we haue by Baptiſme drowned the one, ſo we may, by true Pennance and Contrition waſh away the other, that being ſprinkled with the dew of diuine grace, and made more white then ſnow, we may appear moſt ioyfully in the ſight of thy ſweet Son, whoſe pretious bloud hath beene the medicinable riuer *Iordan*, to waſh away our Leproſy. Pray for vs, O ſacred Queen, that we may ſo imitate this thy Angelicall purity, & be moſt pure children of a moſt vnſpotted Mother. Amen. *O glorioſa Domina &c.*

THE VIII. MEDITATION.

Mater Castissima, ora pro nobis.
Most chast Mother, pray for vs.

WE haue already in the fourth Meditation spoken of the excellency of the virginity of this powerfull Queene. Now are we to consider the renowned title of her singular Chastity, by which we salute her whē we say, *Most chast Mother, pray for vs* In this Angelical vertue of Chastity, I find three degrees, which if we consider how eminent they were all in the B. Virgin, we shall easily perceaue how worthily she is called *Mater Castissima*.

1. The first degree of Chastity is coniugall, that is, such as ma

be kept betwixt man and wife, at leaſt for a tyme, as S. *Paul* counſelleth thoſe that be maryed todo, that they might pray the better, and be the fitter for the ſeruice of God. This degree of Chaſtity, the B. Virgin had in the higheſt perfection; for although ſhe were truly deſpouſed to S. *Ioſeph*, and was his vndoubted wife; yet as S. *Gregory* ſayth, he was but *Cuſtos integerrimæ Caſtitatis*, the keeper of her moſt pure Chaſtity. For as the ſacred Text of holy Scripturedoth lay open vnto vs, before they euer came togeather the myſtery of the incarnation of Chriſt was knowne, though not as a Myſtery; and therfore, as S. *Hierome* writeth, *Celabat ſilentio, cuius Myſterium neſciebat*, he coueted with ſilence the myſtery he

knew not: So that the B. Virgin was a wife, but alwayes moſt chaſt, and therefore called a *Moſt chaſt Mother*.

2. The ſecond degree of Chaſtity is of holy Widdowes, who after the death of their husbands moſt earneſtly imbrace this heauenly vertue. In this alſo the B. Virgin was moſt eminent: for it is very probable that *S. Ioſeph* was departed this life before the Paſſion of our Sauiour. And therfore Chriſt commended his B Mother to S. *Iohn*, as himſelfe witneſſeth; after whoſe death, the B. Virgin lead a widdowes life, and was the mirrour of all chaſt Widdowes. Beſides ſhe may be ſayd to be a Widdow after the Aſcenſion of Chriſt, in that, ſhe was left as it were, *Viduata colum-*

ba, a doue without her mate, alwayes groaning, euer mourning like the forſaken Turtle, vntill ſhe came to meet him againe in the happy pallace of eternal bliſſe: ſhe therefore was a moſt chaſt Widdovv, and that in a moſt remarkable manner.

3. The third and moſt renovvned degree of this noble Vertue, is called Virginal Chaſtity, which is, vvhen Virgins wholy dedicate themſelues vnto Chriſt by holy vow, and take him for their only ſpouſe, as the B. Virgin vvas the firſt that euer did, binding her ſelfe by vow of perpetuall chaſtity to be vvholy and only his; after whoſe rare example ſo many thouſandes of holy Virgins haue followved vvith vndaunted courage, and many of them loſt their

liues in the iuſt defence of this worthyly eſteemed vertue. And how eminent the B. Virgin was in this, we may eaſily gather out of that which hath beene ſayd of her *Chaſt Virginity*.

And by theſe three degrees, which we find moſt eminent in the B. Virgin, we may eaſily conceaue with how great reaſon ſhe is intitled, *Mater caſtiſſima*, moſt chaſt Mother. We muſt therefore mooue our ſelues with an earneſt deſire, & louing affection toward this vertue, and no leſſe towardes the B. Virgin, who ſo greatly excelled in it. And with theſe deſires we muſt fall downe before this *chaſt Mother* to implore her ayde and help, for the better accompliſhing what we deſire, and ſay *Virgo ſingularis, inter omnes mitis, nos*

Collo-quium.

culpis

culpis ſolutos, mites fac & caſtos: Virgin without peere, & amongſt all others moſt mild, we being cleanſed from our ſinnes by thy holy interceſſion, make vs alſo both mild & chaſt. Amen. Then we may conclude, to this effect, with the deuout Hymne, *Ave Maris ſtella.*

THE IX. MEDITATION.

Mater Inuiolata, ora pro nobis.

Vndefiled Mother, pray for vs.

BY this moſt worthy Title is ſignifyed vnto vs the admirable combination of the dignity of Virginity, ioyned with the honour of *Mother*; a thing naturally impoſſible, and only by the omnipotent hand of God to be brogh

to passe. Therefore in this Title we are to consider this wonderfull worke of admiration, and to prayse the diuine prouidence of Almighty God; who to prepare our hard hart to the great mystery of the Incarnation of his only Sonne, would beginne with this admirable Conception, long before discouered by the holy Prophet *Isay*, *Ecce Virgo concipiet, & pariet filium*: Behold a Virgin shal conceaue, and bring forth a Son, that is, neither the strang conception, nor desyred birth of that miraculous Sonne, should any way impeach or diminish the dignity of Virginity, & yet he should bring with him the fecundity of a Mother: therfore the sayd Prophet as it were inuiting vs to admiration, sayth, *Ecce*, behold.

And the holy Prophet *Hieremy* called it *Nouum*, a new thing, as indeed it was both ſtrang & new. She was a chaſt Virgin, yet a fruitfull Mother, and therfore a Virgin-Mother, *Mater inuiolata*, an vndefiled Mother. For how could ſhe be defiled, who conceaued by the worke of the Holy Ghoſt? how could ſhe be ſpotted, who, as S. *Ambroſe* teacheth, *Corpus ſine corporis contagione concepit*, conceaued the ſacred body of Chriſt without any contagion of her owne.

Let vs therefore by this both prayſe the goodnes of God, for choſing the B. Virgin an inſtrument of this diuin miracle of miracles; and alſo congratulate our happieſt Queene, that ſhe was elected to ſo high a dignity, & of ſo great

Colloquium.

great esteeme in the sight of God, and so the more powerfull to help vs, when we say, *Mater inuiolata ora pro nobis*, vndefiled mother, pray for vs. For calling vpon her by this diuine Title, is as much as to say, for the loue of that diuine worke of admiration, wherin thou wert made Mother of God remayning a Virgin, pray for vs. For the ioy thou didst conceaue in this diuine Mystery, pray for vs. In honour of this vnspeakable combinatiõ of the venerable title of Mother, with the shinning lustre of virginity, pray for vs: & obtayne, that by thy powerfull prayers and holy intercession we may be worthy to conceaue thy Blessed Sonne sweet Iesus in our soules. Amen. *Salue Regina.*

THE X. MEDITATION.

Mater Intemerata, ora pro nobis.

Vntouched Mother, pray for vs.

BY this *Epitheton*, we muſt cõſider another excellent property of the B. Virgins chaſt renowne. For as in the former title we did contemplate how ſhe was Mother, yet without all ſtayne of her angelicall purity: ſo heere we may ponder the vnſpotted beauty of her chaſt virginity, not any whit diminiſhed, or ſo much as touched vvith that wonderfull acceſſe of this new title of *Mother*, and therfore moſt aptly ſhe is intitled, *An vntouched Mother*.

The Lilly which is the chief ſymbole and figure of Chaſtity, is of it owne nature of moſt dain-

ty condition. To the eye moſt pleaſing, to the ſmel moſt fragrāt; but if it come to be handled, or touched, it is ſo ſoon bleamiſhed, that it looſeth both the exquiſite ſmell, and the excellent beauty: ſo the renowned vertue of chaſt Virgins will not admit the leaſt touch of any earthly affection, & worldly loue, without a perpetuall ſtayne and vtter diſgrace of ſo rare a vertue. And becauſe this beautifull *Lilly of the valleys*, the B. Mother of God, was *Lilium inter ſpinas*, a Lilly a midſt thornes; yet euer vnſpotted, vndefiled, & vntouched, therefore ſhe is called *Mater intemerata*. Of this moſt pure Virgin the holy Catholike Church ſingeth: *Benedicta & venerabilis es Virgo Maria, quæ ſine tactu pudoris inuenta es Mater Saluatoris.*

Bleſſed

Bleſſed & venerable art thou, O Virgin Mary, who without any touch of thy chaſtity didſt becom the Mother of God.

Let vs ſee further how this admirable worke was effected. She, as the moſt beautifull flower of virginity, was replenriſhed with great aboundance of grace, and ſo ſaluted by the heauenly Embaſſadour, when he denounced vnto her that ſhe ſhould become Mother of God: yet our ſacred Queene replyed, in the behalfe of her vnſpotted purity, asking how that could come to paſſe, being ſhe was a vowed Virgin? To which the Angell anſwered, that it was a worke to be accompliſhed by the diuine help of the holy Ghoſt; and therefore the child ſhe was to beare, was to be the

Sonne of God. The humble obedient Virgin, diuing in the depth of her owne nothing, anſwered withall ſubmiſſion, and moſt perfect reſignation, *Ecce Ancilla Domini, fiat mihi ſecundum verbum tuum*: Behould the hand-mayd of our Lord, let his wil be fulfilled in me, according to thy ſpeach. And ſo by this humble conſent, by this admirable *fiat*, ſhe became indeed Mother of God. Behold then how ſhe was made Mother, yet with the integrity of her virginall chaſtity. By a word, with a *fiat*, the heauens were created, the Sunne, the Moone, and all the glittering light of heauen; by a word, with a *fiat* the earth was made, the Sea, the Land, and all thinges els that ſea and land contaynes: now (O miracle of miracles) by one word

by

by one *fiat* of a Virgin, God himſelfe is made Man, conceaued by a chaſt conſent, borne of a pure and vnſpotted Mother, *Mater intemerata*.

O diuine Mother, let the ſweet perfumes of this Angelicall vertue, ſo enter into our ſenſes, ſo wrappe our vnderſtanding, and ſo rauiſh our will, that we may admit no other thought, or imagination, no other affections or deſires, but ſuch as may bring forth this ſweet ſmell, this fragrant perfume of purity; that we may be grateful in the eyes of our Creator, pleaſing in the preſence of our Redeemer, and in thy ſight worthy to be beloued. Amen. *Aue Maris ſtella*. *Colloquium.*

THE XI. MEDITATION.

Mater amabilis, ora pro nobis.

Louely Mother, pray for vs.

MANY causes may be assigned & many reasons found why the B. Virgin is sayd to be *louely*, which I will endeauour to reduce to three general heads, because I will not exceed my wonted breuity.

1. The first cause or reason, which both maketh her louely, & moueth vs to loue her, may be her excellent beauty, which did so abound in this *louely* Queen, as the like hath not beene found in any other. For as our Sauiour was the most beautifull of men according to the kingly prophesy, *Speciosus forma præ filijs hominum*,

beauti-

beautifull and comely in ſhape beyond the ſonnes of men: ſo the B. Virgin was moſt beautifull of all the daughters of women; that whoſoeuer ſhould behould them both, might ſay, ſhe could not be Mother, but of ſo fayre a Sonne, nor he Sonne, but of ſo beautifull a Mother. And this beauty of the B. Virgin (of externall beauty & comlines we ſpeake) did conſiſt in a moſt perfect proportion of all the lineaments of her ſacred body, whereby ſhe was *pulcherima mulierum*, the moſt beautifull of women, and therfore moſt *louely* in that reſpect. Neither was her virginal comelynes ſuch as vſually doth ſtir vp wanton luſtes, or inflame bad deſires; but altogeather ſo far contrary, that who ſo ſhould behold the beautifull bluſh

of her modeſt and virginall countenance, could not choſe, but be inflamed with moſt chaſt deſires and feruent loue towardes this vertuous Queene.

This then may be giuen for the firſt reaſon of this louely title, *Mater amabilis*. And in this beauty I include her grauity in ſpeach, her modeſty in countenance, her grace in conuerſation, & the due proportion of all her actions, being alwayes guided and gouerned by her inward vertues, of vvhich heereafter we ſhall haue occaſion to ſpeake more. *Iudith* being to worke the ouerthrow of proud *Holofernes*, in defence of her citty and people, adorned and decked her ſelfe withall the richeſt iewels and beſt ornaments ſhe had, and made herſelfe as beautiful as with

her beſt skil ſhe could, ouer which Almighty God caſt a ſplendour, of which holy Writ telleth vs: *Cui Dominus quoq; contulit ſplendorem*, vnto which beauty our Lord alſo added a luſtre. And ſhall we not then thinke of the B. Virgin, vvhoſe figure *Iudith* did beare, that after nature had ſhewed her ſelfe in this admirable worke, that our Lord alſo added the chiefeſt grace of her excellent beauty? How then could ſhe be but *louely*, and therfore, *Mater amabilis*. Iud. 10.

2. The ſecond cauſe, and more chiefe reaſon of her comelynes (which ſhall be the ſecond point) is her invvard beauty, that is, her excellent vertue, by the vvhich deſeruedly ſhe may be ſayd tvvice beautifull, and ſo in the Canticles ſhe is, and that vvith a kind of ad-

miration, *Quàm pulchra es amica mea, quàm pulchra es!* Hovv beautifull thou art my beloued, hovv beautifull! Beautifull by reaſon of her outward comelynes, but much more by reaſon of her invvard vertues: For *Omnis gloria filiæ Regis ab intus*, all the glory of the Kings daughter is from within.

Heere therfore we muſt conſider the ſingular grace & comely meeting of all vertues in this gracious Queene; her profound humility; her humble obedience; her ſhining purity; her vnſpeakable modeſty; her burning charity; and moſt perfect reſignation of her ſelfe into the handes of God, withall the reſt of her excellent vertues in due tyme and place, in the beſt manner, guided by rea-

ſon,

ſon, with exact obſeruation of e-uery circumſtance, and as it were *Caſtrorum acies ordinata*, an army of ſouldiers well ordered. This conſidered as an harmony of perfect muſicke, where no voyce miſſeth his right note and tune, no inſtrument iarreth, no ſound out of order, muſt make vs of force to ſtand amazed at the rare compoſition of her inward beauty, the ſingular concord of her matchles vertues, & thus be moued to loue & affect her moſt worthy perſon, wherin we find them ſo perfectly vnited, and by which indeed ſhe is *Mater amabilis*, a louely Mother.

3. The laſt generall reaſon, and the third point, is to meditat how much we are beloued of her, and in how princely and bountifull

manner ſhe dealeth with vs. For nothing moueth more to loue, then to know we are beloued, & ſince loue can neuer be repayed but by loue, ſeeing ſhe hath ſhewed her ſelfe ſo louely a Mother vnto vs, we are bound in all gratitude and dutifull reſpect, to the vttermoſt of our power, to requite it. She had but one only Sonne, whome ſhe loued far more then al the Mothers in the world loue their children; yet was ſhe content that in his infancy he ſhould be our companion, at his laſt ſupper our food, at his death the price of our Redemption, and now ſhe continually prayeth for vs, that he may be our endles ioy, and happines. How could ſhe ſhevv her ſelfe more louing, or hovv more louely, then like another *Abraham*

to offer vp her owne beloued Son at the commandment of Almighty God, only for our good? Let vs therefore louingly and deuoutly say *Mater amabilis ora pro nobis*, louely Mother, pray for vs. *O glorioſa Domina &c.*

THE XII. MEDITATION.

Mater Admirabilis, ora pro nobis.

Admirable Mother, pray for vs.

IN this admirable title we muſt firſt ſuppoſe the force of this world *Admirable*; for it doth import ſome ſtrange and wounderfull thing which is cauſe of admiration: and from hence miracles do take their name, becauſe being beyond our naturall reach, they make vs admire. But if we

well

conſider the vertuous life, the miraculous death or departure, & the exceſſiue glory of the B. Virgin, we ſhall not only ſee hovv iuſtly this Title is applyed vnto her, but alſo vvith how great reaſon we may ſay, *Mater admirabilis*, admirable Mother pray for vs.

1. Firſt then, in a briefe and compendious manner, we are to call to mind the admirable life of the B. Virgin. Admirable was her cõception, obtayned by prayer and vow, denounced by an Angel, of aged & barren parents, without the ſpot of originall ſin: all theſe thinges are great cauſes of admiration. Admirable was her ſtrang Natiuity, borne in the field (as S. *Iohn Damaſcen* witneſſeth) in a certaine grange of her Fathers, among the ſweet tu-

ned

ned notes of innocent bleating Lambes, as one who vvas to be the Mother to the immaculate Lambe of God, deſigned to be ſlaine for ranſome of vs all; or as one who vvas to bring vs the true ſheep-heard of our ſoules, vvho would haue moſt tender care of vs. Admirable, in that ſhe vvas preuented vvith the vſe of reaſon either in her Mothers wombe, or at the third yeare of her age, whē ſhe vvas offered vp and preſented in the Temple. Admirable in her life and conuerſation, and aboue al admirable in that ſhe vvas both Mother and Virgin. Admirable alſo in her conſtancy, at the foot of the croſſe, admirable in knowledge, in grace, and in all kind of vertue. Theſe thinges, and the like conſidered, will giue vs per-

fect vnderſtanding how ſhe is indeed *Mater admirabilis*, an admirable Mother.

2. The ſecond point is to ponder the admirable departure of her Bleſſed ſoule out of her ſacred body, and out of this life. For ſhe liued 72. yeares, dyed not of any diſeaſe, or diſtemper of diſordered humors, but of pure loue and longing deſire to be with Chriſt her deareſt Sonne, which was an admirable death. Beſides, all the Apoſtles then liuing were miraculouſly gathered togeather at her departure, and moſt ſolemly performed the dutyes of her exequies. After three dayes, our Sauiour deſcended from heauen accompanyed with his Quires of Angells, and aſſumpted her into heauen body and ſoule, where ſhe

vvas ſeated in ſuch maieſty, and crowned with ſo great glory, there to raigne for euer.

3. The third point, ſhallbe to admire this Elected Queene of Angells paſſing through the Bleſſed company of Virgins, leauing behind her the conſtant Confeſſors, glorious Martyrs the holy Apoſtles, Patriarkes, and Prophets; mounting aboue the nine Quires of Angells, ſeated aboue the Cherubims and Seraphims in a Royall Throne by her ſelfe, as beſt befitted ſo glorious & admirable a Mother. And if we will at length come to the height of admiration, let vs behould this diuine Empreſſe veſted with the Sunne, crowned with ſtars, and treading the Moone vnder her victorious feet, that is, in exceeding

great

great glory, answerable both to her admirable titles, and singular vertues. For as we haue already meditated, she was enriched with more grace and spirituall gifts, then al Saints and Angels besides, and therfore must haue a Crown of glory answerable thereunto; which must exceed the glorious crowns of them all. And by these three points we see how she was admirable in life, admirable in her departure, admirable in glory, & so most worthily called *Mater admirabilis*, an admirable Mother.

Colloquium.

O most admirable, and euer happy Mother, who art in all points so much to be admyred; be now vnto vs a powerful aduocate that we may (as far as our weaknes will permit) imitate thy admirable vertues in our life; that

we may find comfort at our death and deſerue to receaue a Crown of glory with thee in heauen for all eternity. Amen. *O glorioſa Domina.*

THE XIII. MEDITATION.

Mater Creatoris, ora pro nobis.

Mother of the Creatour, pray for vs.

MANY of theſe Titles are the ſame in effect, with *Mother of God*; yet we will ſo conſider them, that we may conceaue ſome particuler reaſon of this, & the like titles, whereby the great dignity of the B. Mother of God may the more appeare. For although ſometymes we vſe to attribute Omnipotency to God the

Father, Wisedome to the Sonne, and Bounty to the holy Ghost; yet being all but one God, they are all equally Omnipotent, Wise, and Bountifull: And becauſe in their outward actions (as the Deuines ſpeake *ad extra*) they work inſeparably, ſo that whatſoeuer the one doth, they are ſayd to worke all three togeather; Creation is as well attributed to the Sonne, as the Father, and in this ſenſe the B. Virgin is called *Mater Creatoris*, Mother of the Creatour. For indeed ſo he was, ſince as *S. Iohn* ſayth, *omnia per ipſum facta ſunt*, all thinges were made by him. Heere therfore we are to conſider how the infinite wiſedome of God found out ſo ſweet meanes to communicate himſelfe to man, as to ſhut himſelfe within

the B. Virgins ſacred wombe, whereby we worthily ſay, *Quem cæli capere non poterant, tuo gremio contuliſti*: He whome the wide heauens could not contayne, thou haſt incloſed in thy ſacred womb.

2. Secondly conſider, that the B. Virgin being mother of our, & her Creatour, ſhe is the fitteſt Patroneſſe for all ſinners to choſe, that the worke of their creation may not be fruſtrate; ſeeing then that God hath created all thinges for vs, and our ſelues for himſelf, let vs make recourſe to the Bleſſed Mother of the Creatour of all things, that by her powerfull interceſſion, we may vſe them according to the end for which they were created, & make of them a ladder to clime and aſcend to the height of that dignity, for which

we vvere ordayned by the eternal Prouidence of God.

3. Thirdly we may contemplat how Creation is nothing els, but the making of a thing of nothing; and this can only be performed by the Omnipotent hand of God: we then considering our selues to be nothing, we may say with the Kingly Prophet, *Cor mundum crea in me Deus, & spiritum rectum innoua in visceribus meis*: Create a cleane hart in me, O God, and renew a right spirit in my bowels since of this nothing of ours, he is able to make most excellent work by the sending his diuine spirit amongst vs. For as we see the scorched fields in the middst of Summer refreshed by some gentle shower; or the face of the earth after a long and tedious winter,

renew-

renewed by a pleaſant ſpring: ſo doth the preſence of this diuine ſpirit make vs all new againe. Therefore if we feele our vertues dying, or our reſolution fayling, let vs not ceaſe to cry, *Emitte ſpiritum tuum & creabuntur, & renouabis faciem terræ*: Send forth, O Lord, thy holy ſpirit, & al things now turned to nothing wil receaue another being, and thou wilt renew the face of the earth: and to obtayne our petition of the Creatour of all thinges, let vs not be vnmindfull of his Bleſſed Mother, but with this worthy title ſay, *Mater Creatoris ora pro nobis*, Mother of our Creatour pray for vs.

THE XIV. MEDITATION.

Mater Saluatoris, ora pro nobis.

Mother of our Sauiour, pray for vs.

THIS moſt Venerable Title doth inuite vs to contemplat a while vpon the ſweet name of Ieſus; for Ieſus and Sauiour are the ſame; and to be Mother of our Sauiour is to be the Mother of Ieſus: let vs therfore vvith attention diligently ponder the greatnes of the gift, that our deuotion towardes the giuer may increaſe the more.

1. Firſt then let vs conſider how vve vvere all loſt, in perpetuall boundage, in euerlaſting thraldome and captiuity of ſinne vntill this B. Mother brought v

forth a Sauiour, a Redeemer, vvhoſe moſt pretious bloud vvas the only ranſome of our ſinnes, vvhoſe death vvas vnto vs life, and vvhoſe bleeding woundes vvere the only cure and moſt ſoueraigne balme of our feſtred ſoules. For darke night ſhe brought vs cheerefull day; for a hard and ſharp winter, a ſvveet & pleaſant ſpring; for our mortall vvounds, immortall medicines; for our pining ſoules, bread of life; and laſtly for all our miſery, the Father of mercyes. This the glorious Angell ſong vnto the ſeely ſheep-hards, in the happy night of his Natiuity, *Natus eſt vobis hodie Saluator, qui eſt Chriſtus Ieſus*: You haue this day born vnto you (of the B. Virgin) a Sauiour, which is Chriſt Ieſus. Our loſt

taſt by this ſvveet Name muſt be reſtored, for he is hony in the mouth: our eares accuſtomed to iarring diſcordes, muſt be reformed by this ſvveet muſicke, for he is melody in the eare: our harts oppreſſed vvith grief & ſorrovv, muſt be repleniſhed vvith ioy, for he is gladnes in the hart.

2. Secondly to diue yet deeper into the greatnes of this beneſit, conſider vvhat ioy a poore priſoner vvould find in his hart, if cõdemned to a moſt ignominious & cruell death, one ſhould come & louingly offer him his pardon? What comfort ſhould one find if being by ſentence iudged to perpetuall baniſhment, a fauourable ſentence ſhould recall him, and place him again in his former honour and ancient dignity? Then

let vs apply this to the B. Virgin, vvho brought vs forth a Sauiour after the ſharp ſentence of death, to pronounce vs a fauourable pardon; and after the doome of perpetual baniſhment, from the ſight of God, for hauing incurred his high diſpleaſure, he hath brought vs backe againe, & made vs Sons of his heauenly Father, & fellow-heires in this ov vne kingdome.

3. Thirdly vve are to conſider the great part our B. Lady had in this happy vvork of our Redemption, being choſen by Gods eternall Wiſedome to be his Mother, and the flovving conduit of all happynes to vs, that vve might vvith great deuotion ſay, *Mater Saluatoris vra pro nobis*, Mother of our Sauiour, pray for vs. And vvhat better petition can

we make vnto her, but that vve may be grateful for ſo great a benefit, that now the price of our Redemption being payd, we neglect not to make our beſt profit and commodity thereof, that he may be truly and indeed a Sauiour vnto vs, as ſhe truely was a Mother vnto him. For how great might our ingratitude be accounted, if after ſo long ſeeking vs, & ſo deare buying vs, we ſhould neglect his bountifull mercyes, and ſeeme to be carelesof his vndeſerued liberalityes.

Colloquium.

O moſt Bleſſed & euer happy Mother of Ieſus, aſſiſt with thy holy prayers, we beſeech thee, thy deuout ſuppliants, that thy ſweet Sonne Ieſus may be vnto vs Ieſus, that is a Sauiour. Behold vve cal vpon thee, Mother of our Sauiour

to be saued, Mother of Iesus to be healed, Mother of God to be made his true and faythfull children by thy powerfull interceſſiō, throgh the infinite merits of the Bleſſed fruit of thy holy wombe. Amen.

THE XV. MEDITATION.

Virgo Prudentiſſima, ora pro nobis.

Moſt prudent Virgin, pray for vs.

THAT we may the better vnderſtand the reaſon why the B. Queene of Angells is called *Moſt prudent*, we will produce three or foure examples of prudēt Matrones in the old Teſtament, who may ſeeme to haue borne the type and figure of this prudent Virgin.

1. The

1. The first we read in the booke of *Iudith*, where this vertuous & prudent matron, seeing the extreme affliction of her beloued nation to increase in such sort that the wisest of them were thinking it best to yeald themselues vnto the merciles handes of their proude enemyes; she prudently by the direction of Almighty God behaued her selfe with such prudence and fortitude, that she both foyled her enemies, and got her people a most famous and triumphant victory: for which she was by the high Priest, and chiefest of the people denounced blessed, and all the vulgar sort answered, Amen. This no doubt was an act not only of inuincible fortitude, but also of admirable prudence. But if we turne our eyes

vnto the ſacred Virgin, we ſhall find that ſhe hath deliuered vs from a ſtronger enemy, preſerued vs from greater danger then temporall death, foyled & ouercome a prouder foe then *Holofernes*; and therefore with great reaſon we may ſay, *Tu gloria Hieruſalem, tu latitia Iſraël, tu honorificentia populi noſtri*: Thou art the glory of *Hieruſalem*, thou the ioy of *Iſraël*, thou the honour and renowne of our Nation. She bedecked with the priceleſſe ornament of vertue, her ſoule adorned with the ſplendor and beames of diuine grace, and aſſiſted by the potent hand of Almighty God, came to tread our ancient enemy Sathan vnder her conquering feet.

2. The ſecond act of admirable Prudence, we read in the

booke

Heſt. 5. booke of *Heſter*, how for the good of her Nation, ſhe aduentured to enter before the King, was inuited by his golden Rod, wher with her great prudẽce ſhe ſo wrought the King, that ſhe obtayned not only the liues of her deare Countrymen, but alſo great and ample priuileges for them; yea & ſeuere chaſtizement of thoſe that ſought her, and her Countryes deſtruction. No leſſe the B. Virgin, after Sathan had conſpired the ouerthrow of mankind, entring before the King of heauen, with her profound humility, ſo prudently ſhe behaued her ſelfe, that ſhe became Mother vnto his only Son, who both deliuered vs from eternall perill, and made vs of the happy number of the children of God, and heyres to the kingdom

of

of heauen, which by our diſobedience we had loſt, and therefore moſt worthily ſhe is called *Virgo Prudentiſſima*, a moſt prudent Vigin.

3. The third and fourth example we haue in *Iahel* & *Abigaël* the one vanquiſhing proud *Siſara* the fierce enemy of the Iewes; the other appeaſing the fell wrath of King *Dauid*, againſt her fooliſh husband, vvhen he was in danger of his life. But hovv often hath this moſt prudent Virgin deliuered vs from our cruell perſecutors, who like roaring Lyons ſeeke day and night whome they may deuoure, & how many times hath ſhe appeaſed the iuſt wrath of God, kindled againſt vs for our foule offences, & brought vs againe into his gracious fauour. Iud. 4. 2. Reg. 25.

O moſt

Collo-quium.

O moſt prudent Virgin, by this we ſee, how fitly this Title doth agree vnto thee; wherefore as by thee we are deliuered from ſo manifold dangers, & by whoſe holy interceſſion we receaue ſo many & gracious fauours, let thy moſt prudent counſell ſo direct vs, that we may auoyd all danger of ſinne, & keep our ſelues in the fauour of thy B. Sonne. Amen.

THE XVI. MEDITATION.

Virgo Veneranda, ora pro nobis.

Venerable Virgin, pray for vs.

THIS worthy Title, doth manifeſt vnto vs the honour due vnto the B. Virgin, which beeing threefold, doth yield vs three ſubſtantiall groundes for

this

this preſent Meditation.

The firſt kind of honour is called *Ciuill*, which is due vnto great Perſonages, by reaſon of their Nobility, Place, Eſtate, or the like. The ſecond is *Religious* worſhip or honour, which belongeth to vertuous and holy men, as they are indued with excellent vertues, eminent graces, and ſupernaturall gifts. The third is *diuine* and *ſupernaturall* worſhip appertayning to God, and his Saints in heauen as we ſhal after declare.

1. Firſt therefore to conſider the B. Virgin according to her lineall deſcent, we ſhall find her worthy to be honoured withall Ciuill honour and dutifull reſpect. For if we ſhould demaund vvith holy S. *Bernard*, *Quid ergo ſidereum micat in generatione Maria?* *Bern. ſer. c. 12. in Apoc.*

ria? What ſtar-like ſplendor doth ſhine in the generation of the B. Virgin Mary? We may take his owne anſwere in the ſame place, that ſhe ſprung from Kinges, of the ſeed of *Abraham*, of the ſtocke of *Dauid*, that ſhe was foreſignifyed by Figures, foretold by Prophets, and by myſticall Oracles inſinuated vnto vs; therefore if we reſpect her Nobility, v ve ſhall find that ſhe is worthy of ciuill honour, in the higheſt degree, and ſo in this reſpect *Virgo veneranda*, a Virgin worthy to be honoured.

2. Secondly if we weigh the great aboundance of her ſingular graces, the greatnes of her excellent vertues, the number of her ſupernaturall gifts, and laſtly the dignity of Mother of God, we

ſhall

ſhal find her as worthy of Religious honour aboue all others, as ſhe doth exceed them all in her ſingular vertues and vnſpeakable gifts. For as the diuine Wiſedome pronounceth of the prudent woman, *Multæ filiæ congregauerunt diuitias, tu ſupergreſſa es vniuerſas*, Many daughters haue gathered riches togeather, but thou haſt gone beyond them all; for we may iuſtly ſay of this ſacred Queene, That many Holy Matrons in the old law, many ſacred Virgins in the new haue been indued with rare vertues, ſingular graces, and meruailous fauours; but when this glittering ſtar appeared, ſhe did as far exceed them all, as the leaſt ſtar is in light inferiour to the Sunne, and therefore moſt worthy of Religious honour Parab. 31.

and reſpect, *Virgo veneranda*.

3. Thirdly if we come to the diuine and ſupernaturall worſhip belonging to God, and his Saints in heauen, we ſhall find her to be preferred before all Saints, & Angels, and inſtalled next vnto God; for as the diuine worſhip of *Latria* (ſo the Deuines terme it) is due, and giuen to none but to God alone: ſo vnto his Saints is due the worſhip of *Dulia*, which belongs vnto them, as friends & ſeruants of God, the moſt eminent degree whereof is called *Hyperdulia*, which moſt iuſtly is giuen to the B. Virgin. Loe how vvorthily we do giue vnto her honour and reuerence in all the ſenſes aforenamed: and why ſhould we not cõfidently fly vnto her in our neceſſityes and troubles, ſaying *Vir-*

go

go *Veneranda ora pro nobis*, Venerable Virgin pray for vs.

Heere we ought to stir vp our affection towards this happy Queene, and earnestly to desyre, that this honour so iustly due vnto her, may be giuen her by al true Christians, and endeauour to the vttermost of our forces to aduance it most carefully, procuring that by our negligence it be not hindred: to which effect we must deuoutly implore her Motherly help, and powerfull hand. Then may we conclude with this diuin Hymne, *Aue Maris Stella*. *Collo-quium.*

THE XVII. MEDITATION.

Virgo Prædicanda, ora pro nobis.

Virgin worthy of prayse, pray for vs.

IN this laudable Title, the B Virgin is denounced to be worthy of prayse and commendation, worthy to be called *Blessed throghout all Generations*: but becauſe Prayſe may be giuen vnto this B. Creature three manner of wayes therfore we will a while contemplate this threefold branch or triple head of her deſerued prayſe.

1. The firſt manner of ſetting forth the B. Virgins prayſe, is in hart, when with a true and cordiall affection we deſire that ſhe may be honoured and prayſed of all people; & that we do inward-

ly reioyce from the bottom of our harts of her eternall glory and euerlasting happynes, prayſing the diuine prouidence of Almighty God that hath choſen and elected her to ſo great felicity; and in this deuout cogitation we may wiſh and deſire for her greater honour the vnderſtanding of Cherubims & the burning loue of Seraphims, the better to blaze her worthy prayſe throughout the whole world, and to inflame the harts of all people to loue and affect her: and in this firſt manner of prayſe the firſt ground and foundation of true deuotion doth conſiſt.

2. The ſecond māner of prayſe is by word, where firſt we may conſider how little we are able to perform in reſpect of what is due vnto her. For how many learned

Fathers, holy men, & great Saints haue ſeriouſly imployed their happy tongues in ſetting forth to the view of the vvorld her rare excellencyes, and yet they haue beene forced to ſay, that they could ſay nothing at all in compariſon of what her heroicall actions haue deſerued. What then ſhal we preſume (moſt holy Virgin) to ſpeak of thy prayſe, where ſo many deuout ſeruants of thyne haue acknowledged themſelues vnworthy? Yet B. Queene we know thou doſt not ponder the words, but the will, not the gift, but the loue, as thy B. Sonne did with the poore, yet truly affected vviddow who with ſo great deuotion offered her little mite among the reſt, and therefore by him iudged to haue giuen more then all the reſt.

Therefore no gift ſo ſmal, but being offered with true deuotion, will be gratefull vnto thee, o B. Virgin. And ſince we neither haue thoſe words which may be fitting vnto thy greatnes, nor the ſincere deuotion which may ſupply them; yet let theſe weake deſires of ours by thy holy interceſſion, ſo increaſe, that it may bring forth ſome fruit worthy to be preſented vnto thee, and gratefull in thy ſight.

3. The third manner of prayſe is *by Worke*, that is, when our workes be ſuch, as they redound to the honour of our B. Lady. For as it vvere not inough for the Iewes to ſay they vvere the Sons of *Abraham*, but they muſt alſo ſhevv the workes of *Abraham*, to be the trueſt ſigne and beſt token

of their progeny: ſo it will little auayle vs to ſay we are the deuout children of the B. Virgin, if our life and conuerſation be not conforme to the rule & ſquare of her directions, which are the right patterne & true forme of perfect life; and which vvhen vve follow, vve greatly cõmend in her. *S Iohn* not content our loue one towardes another ſhould be in wordes only, but that it ſhould alſo appeare in deeds, vvriteth, *non diligamus lingua, & ſermone, ſed opere & veritate*: let vs not loue in the tongue, & ſpeach (as vve ſay from the teeth outvvard) but indeed, and in truth: for works are the ſureſt teſtimony vvhich ſpeak the beſt language for all men to vnderſtand.

Colloquium. O thrice happy they, vvho

haue

haue their vvits and vvills, their minds and harts, vvholy imployed in the B. Virgin prayſes! It is ſayd, there is a tree called *Perſea*, that hath leaues like a tongue, and fruit like a hart, which ſome wiſe men haue applyed to the beautifull concord betwixt the hart & the tongue, whē the tongue ſpeaks what the hart thinkes. But how far more beautifull a concord wil there be, when not only the hart and tongue, but alſo the outward works ſhall ſound forth the ſweet muſicke of the B. Virgins prayſes. Doubles it wil be ſuch as the heauenly Quires will not diſdayne to beare a part; & theſe be the three wayes by which euery deuout child of the B. Virgin, ought to ſing her prayſe. O Bleſſed Virgin worthy of greater prayſe, then

humane

humane or Angelical tongue ca
giue vnto thee, graunt that by th
holy interceſſion we may ſo im
ploy our thoughts, wordes, an
workes in this diuine harmon
of thy prayſe, that they may turn
to the glory of God, to thy ho
nour, & to the profit of our poor
and needy ſoules. Amen. *O glo
rioſa Domina.*

THE XVIII. MEDITATION

Virgo Potens, ora pro nobis.

Potent Virgin, pray for vs.

IN this Title we doe acknow
ledge the great power whic
the B Virgin hath both in heauen
& earth: in heauen to obtayne vs
graces and fauours, in earth to
defend vs from perils & dangers

1. Firſt

1. First then let vs consider her power in heauen: for the better vnderstanding whereof, we will consider the noble and heroicall act of *Salomon* the Wise, who seated in his throne of State, caused his mother to be placed on his right hand, and sayd vnto her, Aske what thou wilt, I will not say thee nay. If King *Salomon* had his dutifull respect vnto his Mother, to make her so potent, that whatsoeuer she demaunded, she should be sure to obtaine; vvhat may we thinke our B. Sauiour would say vnto his louing Mother, when she was seated by him in heauen, but aske whatsoeuer thou wilt my deerest Mother, for vvill not deny thee. For hovv should she be denied who neuer knevv how to aske but wel? And

hovv ſhould he deny, vvho neuer
could deny what vvas asked wel
Could Queene *Heſter* be ſo gra
tefull in the ſight of King *Aſſue*
rus that he bad her aske vvhat ſh
vvould, if it were the halfe of hi
kingdome, it ſhould not be gaine
ſayd · and ſhall we not perſwad
our ſelues, that our B. Lady i
more gratefull in the ſight of th
King of heauen, more pleaſing t
her only Sonne, and therefor
more potent to demaund withou
*Herod. deniall? Could a vvicked * Kin
for a vvanton Daunce make th
like promiſe of halfe his Kingdo
and ſhall vve not beleeue tha
Chriſt vvould be more bountifu
to his deareſt and Bleſſed Mothe
vvho neuer diſpleaſed him? L
vs then conclude this point vvit
this vndenyable truth, that the

Vigri

Virgin is ſo potent in the Court of Heauen, that vvhatſoeuer ſhe demandeth of her Sonne ſhe ſhall obtaine, and therefore let vs ſay, *Virgo potens, ora pro nobis*: Povvertfull Virgin, pray for vs.

2. The ſecond point may be to contemplate her great povver on earth, vvhich is nothing els but the execution of her povver in heauen. For as there her Motherly care and tender loue tovvardes vs, is to obtayne fauours for vs; ſo heere it is to effect, that vve be not fruſtrate of them, vvhich is by defending vs from our proud enemies, and ſtrong aduerſaryes the vvorld, the fleſh, and the Diuell; for as the grace of God is the chiefeſt benefit vve can enioy on earth; ſo that is the marke at vvhich our ſubtile enemy doth

moſt

moſt ayme, thereby to bereaue vs of the right and title we haue to the kingdome of Heauen: where the B. Virgin is moſt watchfull vvith her potent prayers to defend vs, and to put him to flight, if we deuoutly, as we ought, call vpon her, when we find our ſelues in danger. For as a valiant & ſtout Champion vvould be aſhamed euen to heare the Name of that Woman, who ſhold haue cõquered and foyled him in playne field: ſo this monſter of Pride, Sathan, hauing alwayes beene vanquiſhed by her mighty power, dares not abide ſo much, as the naming of that ſacred Name of *Mary*. There fore as we haue often ſayd before, let vs fly vnto her as to a Citty of Refuge, & Tower of defence, for ſhe is able to defe-

Colloquium.

vs; and if we be true Children, ſhe will neuer fayle vs. Hereupon we may conclude this meditation, deſyring that in our temporall Croſſes and ſpirituall tentations, we may be myndfull of ſo ſure a refuge, ſo ſweet a ſuccour, ſo ſtrong a Caſtle, and ſo powerfull a defence. *Salue Regina.* *Colloquium.*

THE XIX. MEDITATION

Virgo Clemens, ora pro nobis.

Clement Virgin, pray for vs.

CLEMENCY is as it were a branch of compaſſionat mercy, by which title we do call vpon the B Virgin, that ſhe may take pitty and compaſſion of our miſeries, and commiſeration of our

neceſſities, notwithſtanding our vnworthynes, wherby ſhe makes her ſelfe moſt like vnto her ſweet Sonne, who came into the world to forgiue the fault, and pardon the offender: and by how much greater the fault is proued which is cõmitted: by ſo much more the greatnes of the Clemency doth appeare in him that pardoneth. If therfore we conſider the iniury done vnto the B. Virgin, when we offend her ſonne; we ſhall ſee her high Clemency both in pardoning, of her part, the ſo heynous offence; and alſo her Mercy in intreating before the mercy ſeate for the life of him who hath ſo often deſerued death.

1. Firſt let vs conſider, how much the obſtinat and ſtony harted Iewes did againſt all iuſtice,

law,

law, and conſcience; they abuſed her only Sonne, reiected, ſcorned, and put him to an ignominious death: yet when ſhe heard the pittifull voyce of Chriſt vpon the Croſſe, crying to his Eternall Father to pardon them, ſhe alſo forgetfull of all wrong ſaid; *and I thy mother, do alſo forgiue them*. Behould the rare Clemency of the tender bowells of the B. Virgin, whome no wrong could moue, no rage ſtir vp, nor any fury driue from her wonted Clemency, & moſt mild behauiour. And ifthus ſhe prayed for the profeſſed enemyes of Chriſt, why ſhould not they who loue him, and deſire only to ſerue him, confidently implore her gratious help, & ſay, *Virgo Clemens ora pro nobis*, Myld Virgin pray for vs. Salmerō.

2. Secondly, let vs ponde
the Ingratitude of man, after
much knowledge of Christ, th
he doth not cease, (as much
in him lyeth) to crucify him
gaine by euery mortall synne th
Heb. 6. he committeth as S. *Paul* writet
Neither doth he this abuse of ig
norance, as Christ pleaded f
the Iewes; but after the firme b
liefe of his Godhead, his Incarn
tion, Death and Resurrection, y
after he knowes him to be asce
ded and seated in heauen, when
he shall come to be our terrib
Iudge: yet forgetfull of al, he ce
seth not to offend him, and st
his blessed Mother doth interpo
herselfe, as a wall for *Ierusalem*
that is, for him who will truly r
pent, and call for mercy in tym
with a firme purpose and stron

reſolution neuer againe to offend him.

O incomparable Clemency of this B. Virgin, who deſireth nothing, but to do good euen vnto thoſe vvho are moſt vvorthy of exceeding great puniſhment! vvho vvould be ſo careleſſe of his owne good, vvho ſo negligent of his ſaluation, as not to fly vnto his Sanctuary, as not to runne vnto this fountaine, as not to imbrace this ſweet remedy. The poore blind man cryed to Ieſus for ſight, and vvould not ceaſe (though ſome rebuked him for it) vntil he obteyned the effect of his deſire: ſo let vs call vpon this clement and meeke Mother, howſoeuer others repine therat; let vs fly vnto this mild Virgin; Let vs not ceaſe to ſay, *Virgo Clemens, ora*

Colloquium.

pro nobis, Clement Virgin pray for vs.

THE XX. MEDITATION

Virgo fidelis, ora pro nobis.
Faithfull Vigin, pray for vs.

FAITHFVLLNES may be taken diuers vvayes, and therefore diuers vvayes doth yield copious matter of the B. Virgin prayse.

1. First therfore vve may consider *fidelity* as it doth import an excellent act of supernatural beleefe, in vvhich vve shall find the sacred Virgin to excell, as in all other vertues, & by the tōg of the holy Ghost, for the saf canonized a liuing Saint, and

led *Bleſſed: Beata quæ credidiſti quoniam perficientur in te quæ dicta ſunt tibi à Domino:* Bleſſed art thou who haſt beleeued, becauſe in thee ſhalbe perfected thoſe myſteries vvhich were declared vnto thee from our Lord. For doubtleſſe ſhe had moſt excellent actes of faith, concerning the high Myſtery of the Incarnation eſpecially, and therfore as one truly faithfull vve may inuocate her holy and willing aſſiſtance, ſaying, *Virgo fidelis ora pro nobis*, faithfull Virgin, pray for vs.

2. Secondly we may conſider Fidelity as it doth import a certaine kind of aſſurance of one friend towards another, wherby the one is fully perſwaded of his friends loue & help in all things, ſo long as he keepeth himſelfe

within the bonds and limits of a true friend. And of the fidelity of our B. Lady, and louing mother, we need not doubt, who is moſt ready to help & comfort vs in all our miſeries, tribulations, and afflictions, if our ſelues by our ingratitude, and little reſpect vnto her, deſerue not the repulſe. Therfore keeping our fidelity with her ſweet Sonne, and herſelfe, we may aſſure our ſelues of her fidelity towards vs, at all tymes, in all occaſions, and in all our buſines we ſhall alwayes find her *Virgo fidelis*, a faithful Virgin.

3. Thirdly we may conceaue fidelity as it doth ſignify the faithfull accompliſhing of all buſines committed to our charge: in which ſenſe our Sauiour ſpeaketh in the Parable of the talents, con-

gratulating the diligent labours of his faithfull ſeruant, *Euge ſerue bone & fidelis, quia in pauca fuiſti fidelis, ſuper multa te conſtituam*: Well, good and faithfull ſeruant becauſe thou haſt byn truſty ouer a little, I will make thee ſteward ouer much. And in this ſenſe how worthily the B. Virgin is ſaid to be *faithfull*, will eaſely appeare, if vve conſider aright hovv profitably ſhe did imploy al her rare talents, wherwith her bleſſed Sõne had endued her. For what guifts either of Nature or Grace, what talents either naturall or ſupernaturall (in all which ſhe did abound) did ſhe not fully imploy in the ſeruice of God, and profit of her neighbour, whoſe only ſtudy was to pleaſe the one, and help the other, & therfore had

the only priuiledge neuer to offend him, or be wanting to them? So as we knowing her loue no leſſe towards vs now, then it was vvhilſt ſhe liued, and her povver far greater, do confidently ſay, *Virgo fidelis, ora pro nobis*, faithfull Virgin, pray for vs.

4. Laſtly we may contemplate hovv Fidelity doth ſignify the ſtrict band of true loyalty betvvixt true and lawfull ſpouſes: which if we cõſider in the B. Virgin towards *S. Ioſeph*, it may ſerue for a mirrour to all vertuous and godly ſpouſes: but if vve weigh the matcheleſſe example of her conſtant fidelity towards the Holy Ghoſt, to whome by ſpeciall grace, and holy vow, ſhe was eſpouſed; it will ſo farre paſſe the ſhort reach of our weake vnder-

ſtan-

ſtanding, that we ſhall be no more able to view the perfection therof, then the ſeely Bat, or harmeleſſe owle is able to gaze vpon the glittring beames of the ſunne; yet may we with all humility ſay, *Virgo fidelis, ora pro nobis*, faithfull Virgin, pray for vs; ſince in all thoſe ſenſes of Fidelity, vve find her to haue the chiefeſt place. *Aue Maris ſtella.*

THE XXI. MEDITATION.

Speculum Iuſtitiæ, ora pro nobis.
Mirour of Iuſtice, pray for vs.

IVSTICE in this place doth not ſo much import the ſpeciall vertue of *Iuſtice*, as a generall collection of all vertues togeather, wherby a man doth perfectly con

forme

forme himſelfe to the will of God in all things, and is therfore ſaid to be *Iuſt*. In which ſenſe to call our bleſſed Lady *Mirour of Iuſtice*, is as much as to ſay, the perfect patterne of all vertue, becauſe in her (as out of S. *Ambroſe* we haue noted) *velut in ſpeculo refulget ſpecies caſtitatis & forma virtutis*: as in glaſſe the beauty of Chaſtity, and forme of all vertue ſhineth.

Ambr. lib. 2. de Virgin.

1. Wherfore in this tytle we are to conſider the *B. Virgin* as the perfect modell of all our actions, becauſe by this we ſhall moſt euidently ſee, what is to be followed, what to be eſchewed, what to be imbraced, what reiected: finally how to order our liues and actions to the greater honour & glory of God. We muſt therfore look

into

into this Glaſſe, not for curioſity to behold our beauty, but with earneſt deſire to amẽd our faults, we mnſt conſider her excellent vertues as the aboue named Saint did, when he wrote, that ſhe *Was humble in mind, graue in ſpeach prudent in iudgment, ſparing in words, ſtudious in reading, repoſing her hope-full truſt not in the vncertainty of riches, but in the deuout prayers of the poore: ſhe Was willing to worke, baſhfull in ſpeach, accuſtomed to ſeeke not men, but God, for the arbiter of her mind; ſhe hurt no man, ſhe Wished well to all, reſpecting her elders, not enuying her equalls, flying boaſting, followving reaſon, and louing vertue.* This and much more to this effect doth S. *Ambroſe* write, wherby we may ſee, that moſt worthily the B. Virgin is ſaid to be, *Speculum*

Ambr. vbi ſupra.

culum Iuſtitiæ, the Mirrour of Iuſtice.

2. How carefull would any gentlewoman be, if ſhe were to ſpeake in the preſence of a great Perſon, to view herſelfe in a glaſſe once, and many tymes, leaſt any ſpot or blemiſh in her face, any fault or diſorder in her attyre, might make her leſſe gratefull in his ſight, then either he deſerued, or ſhe could wiſh: and ſhall not we, when we go to ſpeake with the King of Kings, for the better and more decent attyring of our ſoules, looke in this glaſſe of all perfection, and learne to decke & adorne our ſelues in ſuch ſort, that we may not ōly with Queen *Heſter* deſerue to be inuited with the golden Rod of Gods Mercy, vnto his diuine preſence, but

alſo be made worthy to obtaine of him, what we moſt deſire? Yea, let vs not looke only into this myſtical glaſſe, but alſo let vs vſe it as a powerful help to obtain our wiſhed ſuite and petition: let vs frame our actions according to the liuely portraict of her excellent vertues, that we may with greater confidence implore her powerfull ayde: let her be our Patterne and Patroneſſe in life and death: let vs deuoutly ſay, *Speculum Iuſtitiæ, ora pro nobis.* Myrrour of al perfection, pray for vs. *Aue Maris ſtella.*

THE

THE XXII. MEDITATION

Sedes Sapientiæ, ora pro nobis.
The ſeate of wiſdome,
pray for vs.

IT is written by the diuine in
ſtinct of the holy Ghoſt, an
left for our inſtruction, that *Wiſ
dome built himſelfe a howſe, vnder
propped and borne vp with ſeaue
ſtately Pillars*, which not vnfitl
we may apply vnto the Eterna
Wiſdome of the Sonne of God, i
beautifying and adorning the B
Virgin for his mother, and ma
king her indeed *Sedes ſapientiæ*, th
ſeate of Wiſdome.

Let vs therfore conſider th
ſeauen ſtately Pillars which ou
Sauiour did erect in this his ſpiri

tua

tuall Soule, his myſticall ſeate, for doubtleſſe they were the ſeauen guifts, & ſeaué-fould grace of the holy Ghoſt, to wit, *Wiſdõ, Vnderſtanding, Counſell, Fortitud Science, Piety, & feare of our Lord*, al which how eminent they were in our B. Lady, no true Chriſtian wil cal in queſtion; wherby ſhe became the worthy *ſeate of VViſdome*, the princely throne of the true *Salomon*, & the holy mother of God.

1. And for two reaſons we may call the B. Virgin the *Royall ſeate of VViſdome*. Firſt, in that ſhe was the moſt bleſſed, and ſelected Creature choſen amongſt, and aboue all women, to be his holy mother; in whoſe ſacred wombe he was to take his nyne moneths reſt, and then to be moſt louingly folded in her tender armes, and

ſeated on her lappe, with all reſ
pect vnto him, as her God, and
no leſſe loue as to her Sonne; and
therfore was the *ſeate of VViſdome*.

2. The ſecond reaſon why ſhe
may be ſo intytled, is becauſe, if
wiſdome be taken for the grace
of the holy Ghoſt, or the ſpiritual
dwelling of Chriſt in a ſoule, we
ſhall find that neuer in any pure
Creature the like aboundance of
wiſdome was found, the like
graces, fauours, & ſupernatural
gifts. And becauſe ſhe ſo careful
ly kept theſe gracious guifts, that
ſhe alwayes deſerued to keep God
in her bleſſed ſoule; therfore ſhe
may more properly be ſaid to be
the *ſeate of wiſdome*. For although
Chriſt many tymes viſiteth moſt
mercifully the vnworthy howſe
of our ſoules; yet by reaſon of our

ſtrange

ſtrange ingratitude, wee do not eſteeme as we ought, the heauēly company of ſo worthy a gheſt, & the ſingular fauours of ſo ſpeciall a friend, but by our offences we expell him from the howſe of our ſoules, and yeild his rightfull ſeate vnto his vſurping enemy. But our bleſſed Lady was alwaies conſtant, euer true vnto him, and therfore his perpetuall ſeate, according as our Sauiour witneſſeth of euery iuſt man, *adeum veniemus, & manſionem apud eum faciemus*: vve vvill come vnto him and make our manſion or place of abroad with him. Ioan. 14.

O Bleſſed and euer moſt happy Virgin Mother, the Regall ſeat of Eternall wiſdome; Let thy poverfull interceſſion ſo preuayle, vith thy louing Sonne, that vve Colloquium.

may in ſuch ſort receiue him, into the hovvſe of our ſoules, that vve do not vngratefully caſt him forth againe; but vvithall honour and reſpect ſo ſerue him in this life, that vve may deſerue to dwell in thoſe heauenly manſions of Eternity. Amen. *Salue Regina.*

THE XXIII. MEDITATION.

Cauſa noſtræ lætitiæ, ora pro nobis

Cauſe of our Ioy, pray for vs.

HEEREVVE are to conſide the great ioy vvhich the B Virgin brought into the world a her ſacred birth, according to tha which we read in the office of he Natiuity, *Natiuitas tua Dei Gen trix Virgo, gaudium annunciau vniuerſo mundo*: Thy Natiuity,

Virg

Virgin Mother of God, hath been the long desired messenger of ioy to all the world: for ot thee is borne the some of Iustice, who destroying the former curse, brought a generall blessing vnto vs all. Yet for the better vnderstanding of the greatnes of the ioy we all receiued by her happy comming, it will be good to make vse of this contemplation.

1. Imagine after a long and tedious vvinter, hovv gratefull the approach of a pleasant spring doth seeme, not only vnto man, but euen vnto brute beasts & seely birds, yea in some sort to the very plants, and the earth it self, who vesteth herselfe in nevv apparell to vvelcome the neere approach of the gladsome Sunne, & the pretty birds in their lãguage,

df the like, to ſhevv the greatnes
oo their ioy, vvith their beſt mu-
ſicke.

2. Or els conſider how grate-
full is the beautifull breaking of
fayre morning after a darke tem-
peſtuous night, telling vs vvith
a gladſome bluſh, that the ioyful
Planet, the Sunne, is neere a
hand.

3. Ponder moreouer hov
comfortable vvas the commin
of *Iudith* to the ſorrovvfull gat
of beſeiged *Bethulia*, vvhen ſh
brought them certaine nevves
their preſent deliuery, and futu
ſafety. Then apply all this to t
B. Virgin, cauſe of our ioy, w
after ſo long and tendious a wi
ter of ſinne, and vvickednes,
her happy comming into t
world, did ſignify vnto, vs th

the Lambe of God who taketh awvay the ſinnes of the world, was novv neere at hand, & that the bright ſhyning lampe of heauen, would ſpread ere long his beautiful beams of light vpon the earth, & that the *Sunne of Iuſtice* would ſhortly appeare vnto vs; that it might be fulfilled as the Prophet had foretold: The people that ſate in darkenes, ſaw great light; and to them that dvvelt in the region & ſhaddovv of death, light is riſen. Her happy birth was the fore runner of greater light, and her appearing in this world, the ioyfull dawning of a bleſſed day: her prudent demeanour, and religi ous cariage of farre more profit and comfort vnto vs, then the wonder, and vvonderfull acts of *Iudith* to the *Bethulians*. She to

one people only was the cauſe of ioy; our B. Lady vnto all Nations: ſhe vnto one Citty, the B. Virgin vnto al the world brought ioy and gladnes.

Colloquium.

Let vs therfore not only acknowledge this great benefit, but let vs encourage our ſelues, with greater confidence to inuocate her bleſſed Name, and ſay, *Cauſa noſtræ lætitiæ, ora pro nobis*: Cauſe of our ioy, pray for vs: that as by her perſō, the Sonne of God became man for our redemption; ſo by her holy interceſſiō we may profit our ſelues by ſo priceleſſe a ranſome. *Salue Regina.*

THE

THE XXIIII. MEDITATION

Vas Spirituale ora pro nobis.

Spirituall veſſell, pray for vs.

HEERE we call vpon the B. Virgin by the name of *Spirituall veſſell*, to ſignify the great abundance of her ſpirituall Graces and bleſſings, wherwith ſhe was repleniſhed. We will therfore cõſider the ſweet odours of this diuine veſſell. It is ſaid,

Quo ſemel eſt imbuta recens, ſeruabit odorem, teſta diu,——

with what ſent, or ſauour a veſſel is firſt ſeaſoned, it will conſerue the ſmell therof a long tyme. If thẽ we conſider the firſt ſauour of diuine Grace wherwith this ſpirituall veſſell was ſo aboundantly

ſeaſoned in her firſt Conception, which was neuer after loſt, but increaſed almoſt without meaſure; we ſhall not meruayle at this tytle of *Spirituall veſſell*, or diuine Tabernacle of the Holy Ghoſt. For albeit ſhe was full of grace when the Angell came to deliuer his heauenly Embaſſage; yet the cõming of the holy Ghoſt was promiſed vnto her, and the protection of the moſt high to defend her. Moreouer the day of *Pentecoſt* the ſame holy Spirit deſcended vpon her in more ample manner then any of the reſt, being indeed a veſſell more capable of ſuch diuine influence, then any els, and therfore moſt worthily intytled *Vas Spirituale*, a Spirituall veſſell.

They vſed in the Temple cer-

teine

teine conſecrated veſſells dedicated vnto the ſeruice of God, and could not be applyed to any prophane vſe without the cryme of Sacriledge; and the like is now of the conſecrated Chalices and other holy veſſells. Our B. Lady was a *Spirituall veſſell* conſecrated only to the ſeruice of God, and would haue deemed it a great prophaning of his diuine veſſell, if ſhe ſhould haue admitted the leaſt cogitation of any thought that might haue been vnſeemely in his eyes.

How great was the cryme of *Nabuchodonoſor*, that tooke ſuch veſſells from the holy Temple of *Hieruſalem*; and how ſeuerely his ſon *Baltaſſar* was puniſhed for the prophane vſe he put them vnto, let the Scripture be witnes. But *Dan. 5.*

far

far greater punishment may we assuredly perswade our selues is layd vp for such as eyther shall abuse this sacred Vessell, or not giue that duely deserued respect vnto her which they ought. For if God so seuerely punished the prophaning of his vessells of gold and siluer; what will he do when his holy mother shalbe robbed of her right, and the most worthy vessell in the world be abused? And on the contrary side, vvhat benefits shall they receiue at his bountifull hands, who, with all religious reuerence and duty call vpon her, and esteem her as she is indeed a Spirituall vessell, a consecrated Temple, a diuine Comfort, a gratious Queene, a louing mother and a powerfull Intercessor for all sinners, who deuoutly

come vnto her Sonne by her. Let vs by this ſpirituall tytle call for her ayde, *Vas Spirituale, ora pro nobis*, Spirituall veſſell, pray for vs; that we may be alwaies of the number of thoſe, who loue & defend thee, and who deſire to aduance thy holy name, to the honour of thy bleſſed Sonne ſweet Ieſus. Amen. *O glorioſa Domina.*

THE XXV. MEDITATION.

Vas Honorabile, ora pro nobis.

Honorable Veſſell, pray for vs.

THIS Honourable tytle doth many and diuers wayes demonſtrate vnto vs the dignity of our B. Mother. For if we looke with S. *Paul*, to the powerfull act

of

of Predeſtination, we ſhall find ſome veſſells of Gold, ſome of Clay, ſome of Honour, others of Contumely, ſome Elect, ſome Reprobate: amongſt the which elect we ſhal find the Bleſſed Virgin moſt highly ſeated, & therfore by a certaine kind of excellency ſhe may be ſaid *Vas Honorabile*, an honourable veſſell.

Furthermore ſome veſſells there are which be dedicated only to the Emperours, or Kinges vſe, and therfore honorable veſſells: and ſuch we ſhall find the B. Virgin to be, and ſo much the more honourable, by how much the Emperour and King of heauen (whom ſhe only ſerued) is able to aduance her to more noble ſeruices. If they be called *Ladies of Honour*, who attend about the

Queenes

Queenes perſon; how much more the *B. Virgin*, who attended on God himſelfe, ſhould be eſteemed Honourable, and as ſo pretious a Iewell be accounted worthy of Reuerence & Honour.

Againe, if the word *Honorab'e* be taken in that ſenſe vvhich vve ſpake of, when we treated of the honour due vnto her in Heauen, we haue already declared in the XVI. Meditation, what degree of honour belongeth vnto her aboue all other Creatures; ſince therfore by ſo many tytles, Honour is due, vnto her, all equity and reaſon commands, that vve ſhould not be ſlacke in rendring honour, *cui honor debetur*, vnto vvhome honour is due.

O diuine veſſell of honour, predeſtinate from all Eternity,

and

and choſen to be the elected mo-
ther of him vvho is moſt worthy
of all honour; be our faithfull ad-
uocate before his diuine Maieſty
that we may be alwayes rea-
dy to defend thine honour, and
yield all honour due vnto thee
as the Honourable veſſell of th
holy Ghoſt, and the moſt bleſ
ſed of all women. Amen. *Salu*
Regina.

THE XXVI. MEDITATION

Vas inſigne deuotionis, ora pro nobi

Noble veſſell of deuotion,
pray for vs.

BY this worthy Tytle we ar
taught, what deuotion w
ought to haue towards the bleſſe
Queene of Heauen, and mothe

of God, who is indeed the ſource, fountaine, and veſſell of deuotion. In the Booke of Kings mention is made of a Veſſell of oyle belonging to a poore widdowe, which did not only remaine full it ſelfe, but alſo filled full many other veſſells: which not vnfitly doth reſemble the bleſſed Virgin, where barren and dry ſoules may fully refreſh themſelues, and vve ſhall find her ſo liberall and bountifull a mother, that ſhe will not ceaſe to communicate ſpirituall bleſſings vnto vs, ſo long as vve haue veſſells capable to receiue them. 4. Reg. 4.

If a veſſell ſhould be placed in the midſt of a market, full of gold with free licence for al poore and needy people to repaire thither to releeue their wants: if

any ſhould be found ſo negligen
and careleſſe as not to ſeeke thi
only meanes, to make himſelf
truly rich; he ſhould not only b
iudged worthy to liue in his for
mer miſery, but rightly be con
demned of ſloth and folly. But i
we caſt our eyes vpon this diuin
and noble veſſell, the B. Virgin
we ſhall ſee that Almighty Go
hath placed her firſt in his mili
tant, thē in his triūphant Church
as a miraculous veſſell of deuoti
on, vnto whome all that wan
ſuch heauenly liquor, may wit
confidence approach; and no
only beſprinckle, but euen po
wre full ſhowers of deuotion v
pon their dry & thirſting ſoules
which do, and euer will mo
ſweetly flow from this wonder
full veſſell of deuotion.

In this Celeſtiall veſſell the ncient Fathers dipped their lear- ed, and deuout pennes, when hey left vnto vs ſo many, & moſt orthy monuments of their du- full ſeruice to her bountifull li- erality towards them. With this euotion to this ſacred Queene, he vndaunted ſpirit of *S. Ignati-* was confirmed; the diuine cō- eits of *S. Denis* graced; the witty ntences of *S. Auguſtine* ador- ed: the graue ſayings of *S. Am- roſe* beautified; the learned wri- ngs of S. *Hierome*, honoured; he illuminated mind of S. *An- lme* enlightned; the melliſluous ermons of S. *Bernard* ſweetned; he burning hart of the Seraphi- all doctor S. *Bonauenture*, infla- ned; finally the learned men of al ges, were beſprinkled with this

uenly dew. Let vs not therfore b
our owne wilfull blindnes loo
ſo great a treaſure, and depriu
ſelues of ſo ſoueraigne a remed
but let vs deuoutly, or with deſi
of deuotion, ſay, *Vas inſigne deu
tionis, ora pro nobis*, Noble veſſ
of deuotion pray for vs. *Aue M
ris ſtella.*

THE XXVII. MEDITATIO

Roſa myſtica, ora pro nobis.

Myſticall Roſe, pray
for vs.

OMITTING many prope
ties of the Roſe which mig
moſt aptly be applyed vnto t
B. Virgin, I will only inſiſt
pon three or foure, not to exce
my wonted breuity.

1. Firſt the Roſe is moſt beau-
ifull to behould, and moſt plea-
ing to the eye, eſpecially being be-
ewed with ſome ſweet morning
ower, which if we apply to our
leſſed Lady, we ſhall find that,
naturall beauty none came
eere vnto her, or could be com-
ared with her, as we haue alrea-
y proued. And for the aboun-
ance of heauenly graces, and
holſome ſhowers of bleſſings
owred vpon her, we haue alſo
eclared how farre ſhe did, and
oth excell all other creatures.

1. The ſecond property wher-
our bleſſed Queene reſembles
e Roſe, is in the ſweet fragrant
ell: for as the Roſe is as it were
e Queene of flowers, by reaſon
it ſweet perfuming ſmell; ſo
e B. Virgin, aboue all women

was moſt gratefull vnto God, & the fragrant odours of her ra vertues, as a moſt excellent ſme haue filled the whole Churc with ſweetnes, according to th ſaying of S. *Paul, Chriſti bonus dor ſumus in omni loco*: we are t good odour of Chriſt in eue place: which is verified chiefly the Queene of heauen.

3. The third reſemblance this dainty flower is in colour: ſo as ſome are white, ſome red, thers damaske; ſo our holy M ther the Church doth preſent o Bleſſed Lady vnto vs, ſometym white, as in her imaculate Co ception; ſometymes red, as her vnſpotted purification, wh as old *Simeon* did propheſy vn her, that the ſword of Grie ſhould pierce and wound her

ſoul

ſoule, to wit the bitter paſſion of her louing Sonne, for whome ſhe grieued ſo much, that as many learned Wryters witnes; *plus quàm martyr fuit*, ſhe was more thé martyred. Other whiles ſhe appeares in damaske, as in the admirable Annunciation, where doubtles with a comely bluſh ſhe pleaded with the Angel about the conſeruation of her Chaſt Virginity, which when ſhe vnderſtood it ſhould be kept vnſpotted, ſhe moſt willingly admitted of the Embaſſage.

4. Laſtly a Roſe hath it birth, or as we ſay, ſpringeth from thornes, and amongſt them it groweth vp to perfection: which may be applyed to our bleſſed Lady in two ſenſes. Firſt, that ſhe ſprong from the race of ſinners,

ſicut lilium inter ſpinas, as a lil-
ly, or roſe amongſt thornes. For
albeit her parents were holy peo-
ple; yet not ſo holy, as they could
altogeather auoyd the name of
ſinners, the only priuiledge of
Chriſt and his Bleſſed Mother.
Secondly, as the roſe groweth a-
mongſt ſharpe thornes; ſo the B.
Virgin grew vp in vertue, amidſt
many harſh and ſharpe mortifica-
tions and heauy Croſſes: in ſo
much that ſhe is compared to the
Roſe-bed, *quaſi plantatio roſæ in*
Hierico: like the planting or plan-
ted bed of a roſe in *Hierico*, for the
roſe tree the longer it groweth
the greater and ſharper are the
pricks it beareth; and the Bleſſed
Virgin the longer ſhe liued, the
more her mortifications did in-
creaſe, that ſhe might well ſay

that all her life was *Crux & martyrium*, a Croſſe and martyrdome. And by theſe properties it may eaſily be gathered: how fitly the patterne of all perfection, and the model of patience is compared to the dainty roſe, and therfore myſtically we ſay, *Roſa Myſtica, ora pro nobis*, Myſticall Roſe pray for vs. Amen. *Salue Regina*.

THE XXVIII. MEDITATION.

Turis Dauidica, ora pro nobis.

Tower of Dauid, pray for vs.

IN the fourth Chapter of the *Canticles* the vnſpotted beauty of the Holy Church in diuers places is deſcribed; and in the fourth verſe her *Necke* is compa-

red to the Tower of *Dauid*, built for defence: and moreouer it is ſaid, *Mille clypei pendent ex ea, omnis armatura fortium*; a thowland ſheilds hange theron, all the armour of ſtrong and valiant men. Now let vs ſee, for what reaſon our Bleſſed Lady is called *Turris Dauidica*, the Tower of *Dauid*.

1. The firſt may be, becauſe heere we read that the *Necke* of the Church is compared to a Tower; and we haue ſaid before that as Chriſt is the *Head* of the Church, ſo the B. Virgin is the *Necke*, through which all ſpirituall food deſcendeth to the whole body of the Church: therefore this Tower of *Dauid* is moſt fitly applyed vnto her, and ſhe moſt worthily ſaid to be the tower of Dauid.

2. Secondly

2. Secondly this Tower of *Dauid* was a Tower built for defence, and therfore a thowſand ſhields did hãg on it, & al kind of armor for ſtrong men; which if we accomodat vnto this holy Mother the B Virgin, we ſhall find that ſhe was a ſtately Tower, by reaſon of her height in vertue, & ſtrong by reaſon of her Conſtancy which neuer fayled; and for this ſhe is ſaid to tread the *moone vnder her feete*, which is the ſymbole of Inconſtancy. A thouſand ſhields are alwaies ready and prepared; becauſe as the diuell hath a thowſand crafty ſleights to deceiue; ſo hath this Bleſſed Tower as many diuine plotts to preuent him, which by her rare example ſhe hath left vnto vs, with al kind of Armor, both offenſiue and de-

fenſiue to withſtand the might & force of our ſtronge aduerſary, vvho, as the holy Patriarch *Iob* vvitneſſeth, is ſo potent, that no povver on earth can be compared vnto him. Therfore vvith great reaſon vve fly vnto this ſtrong & inuincible Tower, to cal for ayde, to ſeeke vveapons, to arme our ſelues, againſt the fierce aſſaults of ſo cruel an enemy, ſaying once and many tymes, *Turris Dauidica, ora pro nobis*, Tower of *Dauid* pray for vs.

3. Another reaſon vvhy the bleſſed Virgin is named *Turris Dauidica*, the Tovver of *Dauid*, is, becauſe as it is ſaid of the Church in generall; ſo it may be applied to euery iuſt and vertuous perſon in particuler, and eſpecially to the B. Virgin, who in all vertue and

Religion was moſt excellent; yea ſo, *per excellentiam*, as we ſay, that ſhe may be called the Tovver of *Dauid*, for the reaſons aforenamed.

Wherfore O Bleſſed Virgin, O ſtrong and mighty Tower, vnder the ſhadovv of thy defence we fly for ſuccour. Holy Mary, help thoſe that are in miſery, ſtrengthen thoſe that faint, comfort thoſe that grieue; finally pray for vs all, that vnder ſo ſtronge a tower vve may be able to defend our ſelues from our deadly enemies, the world, the fleſh, and the Diuell. Amen. *Salue Regina.* *Colloquium.*

THE

THE XXIX. MEDITATION.

Turris Eburnea, ora pro nobis.

Tovver of Iuory, pray for vs.

THIS tytle declareth the excellency of the Blessed Virgin. For as Iuory is rare and precious, and therfore a Tower built of it, must needs be of great esteeme and strength; so the Blessed Queen of heauen is of very great esteeme and account; not only in the sight of God, (which is truly to be great) but also in the sight of Angells and men, worthy to be admired. But because we haue already spokē of the Tower, we will novv consider vvhy she is compared to *Iuory*.

1. Iuory amongſt other properties hath this for one, that the older it is, the more it turnes to a beautifull red, or ruddy colour; as vve read in prayſe and commendation of the old *Nazarets*, that thy vvere *rubicundiores ebore antiquo*, more ruddy then the ancient Iuory; vvhich property befitts beſt the Bleſſed Virgin, who the longer ſhe liued in this mortall life, the more ſhe ſuffered; and as her Croſſes did increaſe, ſo the more ſhe drevv to the ruddy colour of Martyrdome: and the neerer ſhe came vnto ſo high a degree of loue and fortitude, the more her golden Charity did ſhine throughout the vvorld; and therfore moſt fitly ſhe is compared not only to *Iuory*, but euen vnto the ancient *Iuory*, vvhen it is in

greateſt

greateſt beauty and vvorth.

2. Another excellent vertue of Iuory is, to expell poyſon from the infected vvaters, vvhich is the cauſe (as ſome do vvrite) that the other beaſts vvhere the vvaters often be pöyſoned by venemous ſerpents, vſe not to drinke vntil the Vnicorne hath dipped in his horne which expelleth al poyſon and leaueth the waters as wholſome as before: which property if we apply to the Bleſſed Virgin we ſhall ſee that no waters of tribulation can be hurtfull to thoſe who ſet her Heroicall example of Patience before them. For as the wood that *Moyſes* caſt into the bitter vvater, made it ſvveet and ſauoury; ſo no Croſſes ſo bitter or diſtaſtfull, but by meditation of her excellent life, will be made

ſweet and pleaſant.

O Bleſſed Virgin, be our *Iuory* Tovver of defence, be our Citty of Refuge, for *ſub tuum præſidium confugimus*, vnto thy holy protection vve fly; let not the ſtrong aſſaults of our enemies daunt vs, nor the fierce encounters of our aduerſaryes diſcourage vs; but with thy powerfull interceſſion help vs, that to the greater glory of thv ſweet Sonne, and further profit of our own ſoules, we may ſtand immoueable in the ſeruice of God, & dayly increaſe in deuotion towards thee. Amen. *O glorioſa Domina.* *Colloquium.*

THE XXX. MEDITATION

Domus aurea, ora pro nobis.

Golden howſe, pray for vs.

IN this pretious tytle, the golden Charity of the B. Virgin is inſinuated. For, as we haue already proued, the famous Temple of *Ieruſalem* built by *Salomon*, and all couered with gold, was a type or figure of the bleſſed Virgin. And as that Temple was a Golden Howſe, built for God himſelfe; ſo was the Bleſſed Virgin a ſpirituall and myſticall howſe, ordeyned and adorned for the diuin Temple of the holy Ghoſt, and Bride-chamber of Chriſt; yea for an elected howſe and hoſpitall

for the Bleſſed Trinity. She is alſo ſaid to be of gould, by reaſon of her burning Charity, and inflaming loue, ſignified by gould. And as Gould excelleth all other mettalls: ſo doth the Queene of Angells, ſurpaſſe all other pure Creatures.

By this we may gather, how different are the wayes of God from the wayes of men, and how far diſtāt his thoughts from ours. *Herod* had his ſtately Pallace adorned richly in outvvard ſhevv; Chriſt his poore mother richly bedecked with inward vertues. The eies of men iudge by the outward face; the eyes of God by the inward hart; therfore the famous Pallace of *Herod* is left; this celeſtial howſe of God choſen; for though the Sonne of the Bleſſed

Virgin had howſe to hide his head, (as himſelfe witneſſeth) ſpeaking of an earthly habitation; yet he neuer wanted this Golden Chappel, this worthy howſe, his deuout mother, to intertaine him, with all loue and tender affection.

Since therfore we haue in this world, no permanent howſe of aboad, no certaine Citty to inhabite, and dwell in, for any long tyme (as S. *Paul* wryteth;) let vs endeauour all to follow the vertuous life of this ſpirituall and myſticall howſe, that we may alſo deſerue to be a howſe, wherin Chriſt may reſt: that intertayning him in our ſoules by grace, in this life, we may be made heire of glory in the next. Amen. *Ave Maris ſtella.*

THE XXXI. MEDITATION.

Fœderis arca, ora pro nobis.

Arke of the Couenant,
pray for vs.

IN the old Law in diuers places is mentioned the *Arke of the Couenant*, made by *Moyſes*, and by Gods expreſſe Commaund, the forme, ſcituation, and all the reſt belonging vnto it: we will briefly conſider, what wood it was made of, and how it was couered with gold, what was kept in it, and ſome properties therof, which we will apply to this our myſticall Arke, the Bleſſed Virgin.

1. Firſt *Moyſes* made this Arke of *Settim* wood, which is *Deut.10.*

called incorruptible, by reaſon of the longe tyme that it remayneth vncorrupted, and this Arke by Gods ordinãce was to be couered all ouer, both within and without, with pure Gold. Heere we may conſider how fitly this figured bleſſed Virgin, who though made of the corruptible Maſſe wherof all men be compoſed; yet by the Eternall wiſdome of God preſerued from all taint of Corruption, both in body and ſoule couered ouer with pure Gold within and without, becauſe her burning Charity within did giue ſo faire a luſtre to all her outward actions, that ſhe did ſeeme to exceed the fayreſt Gold. And as ouer the Arke was a Crown of the ſame pure and maſſy gold; ſo ouer the bleſſed Virgins heauenly head

did hang that vnſpekable Crown of Glory, from all Eternity prepared for her, which ſhe now enioyes.

2. Secondly, we may conſider, that in the *Arke of the Couenant* were kept the Tables of the ten Commaundments, as a witnes againſt thoſe that ſhould afterward rebell; and alſo there was kept a certain meaſure of the *Manna*, in remembrance of ſo great a benefit done vnto the Choſen people of *Iſraell*: So in the Bleſſed Virgins ſacred breſt was layd vp the table of thoſe ten Commaundements which ſhe alwaies kept moſt inuiolable, againſt thoſe who ſhall deny, that they are able to be kept by any. *Deut.10.* *Exod.16.*

And as for the *Manna*, we know ſhe had the keeping of the

Celeſtiall *Manna*, Chriſt Ieſus, the true food of our hungry ſoules, and a memoriall of his trueſt loue, and one of his greateſt benefitts done vnto vs.

3. Beſides this, the Arke coming into the waters of *Iordan*, they gaue place for the Children of Iſraell to paſſe ouer without any danger: which ſignifies the B. Virgins powerfull help, ſtaying the waters of tribulation from the hurtfull purſuite of the Children of God, making them to paſſe as ſecure as if they walked on dry land.

4. And laſtly the Arke with it preſence made the Idoll *Dagon* fall flat downe before it; it was a terrour vnto the enemies of God; and the curious beholders of it, were not a little puniſhed

for their fault: ſo the Bleſſed Virgin hath, and is the deſtroyer of Idolatry, the terrour vnto the enemies of the Church, and a ſeuere Chaſtizer of thoſe who be more curious then wiſe, in matters belonging to her.

Behould then, how fittly ſhe is compared to the *Arke of the Couenant*, who is alſo ready to help vs, to keep the Couenant vve haue made with God, both in the ſpiritual generation of Baptiſme, as alſo in our good purpoſes, vowes, and all other deuotions wherein we giue our ſelues to God Let vs therfore deuoutly cal vpon her holy Name by this worthy tytle, & ſay, *Fœderis Arca, ora pro nobis*, Arke of the Couenant pray for vs. *Salue Regina.*

THE XXXII. MEDITATION.

Ianua Cæli, ora pro nobis.

Gate of heauen, pray for vs.

THIS Metaphoricall ſpeach doth ſignify vnto vs, that as into ſtronge walled Citties there is no hope of entrance, but by the gate: ſo he that pretẽdeth to enter into the glorious Citty of the heauenly Hieruſalem, muſt knock at this beautifull gate the Bleſſed Virgin, who therfore by the holy Church is ſo intytled, as in that diuine hymne *Aue Marris ſtella*, ſhe is ſaid to be *Felix cæli porta*, the happy gate of heauen: and in the Anthym *Aue regina Cælorum*, we ſay, *Salue radix, ſalue porta, ex qua*

mundo

mundo lux est orta: All hayle o B. roote, all hayle o heauenly gate. And conformable to this in these deuout Letanies composed in her honor, we salute her by the name of *Ianua Cæli*, gate of heauen.

1. First therfore we may meditate hovv vve are created for Cittizens of heauen, where all our chiefest treasure is layd vp; by sinne the gate was shut against vs, as rebells against Gods sacred Lawes, vntill Christ by his Omnipotent power did open it again vnto vs, and left this beautyfull gate patent vnto all; that who so vvould enter into this blisfull paradise, should first haue this Gate vvell knovvne, by vvhich he might freely enter into Eternall happines; and therfore she is called *Felix cæli porta*, the happy gate

of

of heauen.

2. Secondly vve may consider, that if this gate be shut against vs, vve can haue but little hope to be able to attain vnto our longing desire of entrance into the Citty; that is, if our life, manners & conuersation be such as may hinder our accesse vnto this stately Gate, vve can haue but small hope of her holy intercession; especially if we cease not to offend her Blessed Sõne, which is the only cause that vvill bread a deniall to our approach vnto that shyning gate, vvho vvith her beautifull beames of light inuiteth al men frõ the works of darknes, to the fountaine of light; from the snaresof death to the fruits of life, & from the valley of extreme misery, vnto the height of all goodnes.

Colloquium.

O let vs not be ſo blind, as not to ſee this light; let vs with holy *Moyſes* put off the ſhooes of our earthly affection, and vvith deuout *S. Bernard* fall before her feete; and as theſe deuout Letanies doe teach vs, let vs ſay *Ianua Cæli*, gate of Heauen pray for vs: and *Felix cæli porta*, o happy gate of heauen, be not ſhut againſt vs, who ſo much deſire to enter by thee and to reigne with thee, for euer. Amen. *Aue Maris ſtella*.

THE XXXIII. MEDITATION.

Stella matutina, ora pro nobis.

Morning ſtarre, pray for vs.

FOR the better vnderſtanding this worthy tytle, we muſt con-

conſider firſt what the *Starre of the morning* doth denote vnto vs, and alſo the tyme of its appearance, by which we ſhall eaſily perceaue how fittly the Bleſſed Virgin is called *Stella matutina*, the morning ſtarre.

1. Firſt as this bright ſhyning ſtarre of the morning, appearing vnto vs, giueth vs to vnderſtand that the darke night is ended, & the cheerfull day at hand; & therfore the diſmall clouds of the night were ſhortly to be diſperſed by the comming of a glittering light, to wit the Sunne: Euen ſo the firſt appearing of the Bleſſed Virgin in this world, was a forerunning of that great light, her ſweet Sonne Chriſt Ieſus, whoſe ioyfull beames were to expell the myſty darkenes of former ignorance

rance with his ſhyning light of doctrine.

2. Secondly this morning ſtarre doth not only foretell the comming of a light, that ſhould be the ending of a ſad and melancholy night, but alſo the beginning of a moſt ioyfull day: ſo the happy birth of the Bleſſed Virgin, did foretell vnto the world, that happy day, that now was at hand, when the Angell ſhould denounce vnto the whole world, and firſt vnto the poore watchfull ſheepheards, *gaudium magnum quod erit in omni populo*, the great ioy which ſhould not be confined ned to the land of *Iury* only, but ſhould be common to al Nations, *mni populo*, to wit, the birth of Chriſt, Sauiour and redeemer of mankind.

3. Againe,

3. Againe, the day-ſtarre ap
peareth more bright and light
ſome, then the reſt of the ſtarr
that ſhyned before in the night
and the Bleſſed Virgin was i
brightnes of ſanctity and cleerne
of vertues, beyond all Stars, tha
is, all the Saints that went befor
or came after her (her Sonne al
waies excepted, as in al ſuch ſpea
ches is moſt fit:) and thus by thi
glittering light, we may eaſily ſe
& truly ſay, *nox præceſſit, dies aut*
appropinquauit: that, the night i
paſt and the day drawes nigh; &
therefore vſing the holy Apoſtle
Counſell, let vs caſt away th
workes of darknes, and arme ou
ſelues with light; and as at myd
day, let vs walke honeſtly in ſigh
of all the world, for in ſuch work
we ſhall be ſure to haue this B

ſtarre to guide and conduct vs; which God graunt. Amen. *Aue Maris Stella.*

THE XXXIIII. MEDITATION.

Salus infirmorum, ora pro nobis.

Health of the ſicke, pray for vs.

ALL manner of ſicknes may be reduced to two kindes of Infirmities; the one corporall, that vexeth and ſometyme taketh away the life of the body; the other ſpirituall, which weakeneth and ſometyme extinguiſheth the life of the ſoule: of both which, we may eaſily perceaue the Bleſſed Virgin, to haue been, and dayly to be a ſoueraigne remedy, by which ſhe is iuſtly ſaid to be *Salus*

infirmorum, the health of the infirme, or ſicke.

1. Firſt then to conſider the Bleſſed Virgins bounty and liberality towards ſicke perſons, vve need no further perſuaſion then the manifold examples written by graue Authors of the almoſt infinit miraculous cures wrought by the Bleſſed Queene of Angels, vpon diſeaſed perſons of all ſorts, and of the deuotion of the places, yet extant, with the frequent concourſe of ſicke and weake people vnto them, with miraculous reſtoring of their health, when it is more conuenient for their good, or the honour of God. This I ſay may ſerue for ſufficient proofe of this point, for all ſuch as are deuoutly diſpoſed towards the B. Virgin.

2. Con-

2. Concerning ſpirituall diſeaſes, it is not vnknowne to any Catholike, how many miraculous Conuerſions haue beene wrought by her holy interceſſion; how many therby haue been brought from the very gates of hell, to the happy gate of heauen; euen ſuch as haue almoſt beene ſwallowed vp in the deſperate gulfe of deſpaire; which is an euident ſigne and token that ſhe is *Salus infirmorum*, the health of the diſeaſed; by her holy interceſſion obteyning the perfect Cure both of body and ſoule; giuing vs therby full aſſurance, that if vve confidently haue recourſe vnto her, we may obtayne the like benefit, if we haue the like deuotion. *Salue Regina*.

THE XXXV. MEDITATION.

Refugium Peccatorum, ora pro nobis.

Refuge of ſinners, pray for vs.

IN the old Law there were many Citties ordeyned by Gods expreſſe commaundment, whither men guilty of certaine Crymes, might fly to ſaue their liues, as now in the new Law our Sanctuaries are, where offendours may be ſafe from the purſuing enemy. And becauſe the Bleſſed Virgin is a common Refuge, to whome all ſinners may fly, to hide themſelues, vntill the wrath of God be paſt; therfore ſhe is called and rightly intytled the Refuge of ſinners.

The ſumme of this Meditaton may be, to conſider, That theſe forenamed Citties of Refuge were ordeyned for ſuch as caſually did murther their brethren; for if wilfully they did commit any ſuch cryme it auayled them nothing at all to fly to the ſaid Citties: So whilſt our ſinnes, be of infirmity and weakenes, we may with confidéce fly vnto her; but if they proceed of obſtinacy and malice, and ſo contynue, we can expect no fauour at her hands, yet in this ſhe ſo excelleth all the foreſaid Citties of Refuge, that although the ſin be of this latter ſort of obſtinate malice; yet if they will informe their vnderſtanding, and conforme their will, ſhe is ready to take them vnder her protection, and with her powerfull pray-

ers obtaine them pardon, & bring them againe into the fauour of God. Since therfore she doth not disdaine to be called *Refuge of sinners*, let vs not be so vngratefull and blind, as not to make vse of so friendly an offer, so stronge a Refuge, and so potent an intercessor, but let vs deuoutly fly vnto her saying, *Refugium Peccatorum, ora pro nobis*: Refuge of sinners pray for vs. *Pater & Aue*.

THE XXXVI. MEDITATION.

Consolatrix afflictorum ora pro nobis.

Comfortresse of the afflicted, pray for vs.

WE haue seene before that this heauenly Queene is a soueraigne remedy of the sicke,

the diſeaſe being either corporal or ſpirituall: now we are to conſider how ſhe is a cõfort to the afflicted, which will appeare many waies.

1. Firſt it is a comfort for one that is in affliction, to knovv that ſome others haue paſſed the ſame way; and farre greater to vnderſtand that they paſſed not only vvithout hurt, but vvith great renowne: So in our greateſt miſeries and calamities if vve looke vpon this comfortable obiect, & conſider the rare example ſhe hath left vs, we ſhall find that all we ſuffer or can ſuffer, is but a ſhaddovv to that which ſhe hath vndergone. This then may be the firſt cauſe of comfort to the afflicted.

2. Secondly it is a great comfort to thoſe that are afflicted,

to haue ſome deare and louing friend to take compaſſion of their miſery, where they behould as it were, the image of themſelues, ſuffering in their friends hart. And doubtles the Bleſſed Virgin hath ſuch perfect loue vnto her true Children, and ſuch tender compaſſion of their afflictions that ſhe cannot chooſe but in a manner ſuffer with them; which is exceeding comfort to haue a partaker of our ſorrowes. For albeit theſe paſſions be not in heauen, yet ſhe hath perfect notice of our troubles, and as a moſt louing mother ſeeketh to remedy our afflictions when it is conuenient for vs.

3. Thirdly, it is a great refreſhing to the afflicted, to know they haue a friend who is able to de-

deliuer them, if they giue him notice of it, and ſhew that they deſire it. And ſuch is the Bleſſed Virgin alwaies ready to giue vs all comfort, if confidently and deuoutly, as vve ought, vve fly vnto her. For ſo povverfull is her interceſſion, that what ſhe asketh for vs ſhe obteyneth; and ſo great her wiſdome is, that ſhe vvill aske nothing but what is conuenient for our eternall good. If therfore in our afflictions, ſhe doth not alvvays ſuccour vs, we may perſvvad our ſelues, that they be more auaylable for our ſpirituall good, then al the comforts in the world. And by theſe conſiderations vve may ſee, how truly the B. Virgin is, *Conſolatrix afflictorum*, the comfortreſſe of the afflicted. *Salue Regina*.

THE XXXVII. MEDITATION.

Auxiliũ Christianorum, ora pro nobis.

The help of Christians, pray for vs.

BY this title all true Christians do acknowledge the powerfull help of the Blessed Virgin in their necessities, especially when they vndertake any worthy exploit for her Blessed Sonne; as the conuersion of Nations, the redeeming of Christian Captiues, or the iust defence of their owne Country, against the treacherous inuasions of barbarous people and Infidells; for in such worthy imployments, as the Christians haue alwayes vsed, to shew their singular deuotion, in the inuoca-

tion

tion of our Bleſſed Lady: ſo ſhe hath neuer fayled in ſhewing particuler fauours towards them.

Beſides, we haue other enimies both ſtronger and ſubtiler, againſt whoſe aſſaults we haue more need of her ayde and aſſiſtance; I meane, the Capitall enemy of mankind, who neuer ceaſeth to deface the very image of God in vs, & who by her powerfull interceſſion and holy prayers is put to confuſion, yea by the only naming of our B. Lady, which he is not able to endure. And laſtly, though we were free from all outward foes; yet ſhall we neuer want a domeſticall enemy, whoſe diſordered appetites & diſhoneſt deſires do ſeldome, or neuer beare ſway in thoſe, who are truely deuoted to the B. Virgin.

Bern. super Miſſus eſt.

To conclude as *S. Bernard* wryteth, Let vs in al tribulations, in all ſtraites, in all dangers, call vpon her Bleſſed name, and vve ſhall proue in our ſelus how righ-tly ſhe may be, and is intytled *Auxilium Chriſtianorum*, the ay-der and helper of Chriſtians: But that we may the better inioy this ſoueraigne help, we muſt examin our ſelues, that we be not, as *Saint Auguſtine* ſaith, *nomine Chriſtia-ni, re vani*, in name Chriſtians, but indeed vayne, and deuoyd of all true Chriſtianity: for ſuch haue put a clowde before the bright beames of her fauour, that they cannot ſhine vpon them. Ther-fore O Bleſſed Virgin help vs, that we may be truly ſeruãts of Chriſt and true Chriſtians; for then we ſhall neuer be deſtitute of thy lo-

uing

uing help, who art the ſheild of all good Chriſtians. *O glorioſa Domina.*

THE XXXVII. MEDITATION.

Regina Angelorum, ora pro nobis.

Queene of Angells, pray for vs.

IN theſe tytles following our B. Lady is called *Queene of Angells*, *Queene of Patriarks*, *Queene of Prophets*, and the like. Wherefore we will briefly aſſigne ſome one or two reaſons, why ſhe may be ſaid to be their Queene, for ſome excellency that did ſhine in her, in that kind. As in this preſent Meditation ſhe is intytled Queene of Angells, by reaſon of her vnſpotted and chaſt behaui-

our,

our, wherin ſhe did excell and lead, as we vſe to ſay, an Angelicall life on earth.

Secondly as ſhe is now crowned Queene of Heauen, ſhe may moſt fitly be called *Queene of Angells*, becauſe they be the chiefeſt aſſiſtants in that heauenly Court, where ſhe, as Queene and Empreſſe, ſits exalted aboue them all, and they no doubt moſt prompt and obedient at her will; and by this vve ſalute her in this place, & call her, as indeed ſhe is, *Regina Angelorum*, Queene of Angells. *Aue regina Cælorum*.

THE

THE XXXIX. MEDITATION.

Regina Patriarcharum, ora pro nobis.

Queene of the Patriarkes, pray for vs.

OVR bleſſed Lady may be called *Queene of Patriarks* in this reſpect, that the high myſtery of the Incarnation was fulfilled in her; and the chiefeſt Promiſes made vnto them had their effect in this Bleſſed Queene. Beſides, her excellent faith of all the myſteries of our faith, did far exceed that of the *Patriarkes*; her zeale was greater, her expectation more feruorous, her deſires more ardent: that whatſoeuer was in them prayſe-worthy, was in the B. Virgin in a farre more high

degree,

degree, and therfore most worthily we say, *Regina Patriarcharum, ora pro nobis*, Queene of the Patriarks, pray for vs.

THE XL. MEDITATION.

Regina Prophetarum, ora pro nobis

Queene of Prophets, pray for vs.

THE holy Prophets, as by their writings we may vnderstand, (and their names import as much) had great light from Almighty God, concerning the mysteries of our faith; the conuersion of the world; the order of the Church; the Birth, Death & Resurrection of Christ, with the rest belonging to our faith: but the light that was communicated

municated vnto our bleſſed Lady, did go farre beyond them, her guiftes and propheſy greater, her grace more aboundant, and was indeed the ſhyning ſtar, at which they in their propheſies did but point, as the Prophet *Iſay* witneſſeth when he ſaith, *Ecce Virgo concipiet*, behold a Virgin ſhall conceaue: and by this ſhe is ſaid Queene of Prophets. *Aue Maria.*

THE XLI. MEDITATION.

Regina Apoſtolorum, ora pro nobis.

Queene of the Apoſtles, pray for vs.

BY greater reaſon, ſhe is ſaid to be the *Queene of the Apoſtles*, then either of *Patriarkes* or Prophets, being (after the Aſcenſion of Chriſt) left amõgſt them as a

Queene to gouerne and direct them, to their exceeding great comfort and conſolation. For although the holy Ghoſt was indeed their chiefe Directour and Rectour; yet it is like that they did many things by her meanes; as it is thought, that *S. Luke* did write his Ghoſpell, eſpecially concerning the infancy of our Sauiour by her direction, though gouerned otherwiſe by the holy ſpirit of God. And therfore when ſhe paſſed out of this life, they all came togeather miraculouſly conioyned, to celebrate with due reuerence and deuotion, the Funerall rites of their ſoueraigne Queene. Behold therfore, hovv deſeruedly ſhe is called *Queene of the Apoſtles. Salue Regina.*

THE XLII. MEDITATION.

Regina Martyrum, ora pro nobis.

Queen of Martyrs, pray for vs.

MOST worthily she is entytled *Queene of Martyrs*, & that for many reasons.

1. First because in her life she suffered more then any, yea then all the Martyrs togeather, as I haue already proued.

2. Secondly she may be called *Queen of Martyrs*, by reason of the rare example that she left them.

3. And lastly, because in their agonyes and passions, no doubt they had particuler help & comfort from her, whome they called vpon, as we do, *Regina Martyrum, ora pro nobis*, Queene of Martyrs pray for vs.

THE XLIII. MEDITATION.

Regina Confessorum, ora pro nobis.
Queen of cõfessours, pray for vs.

CONFESSOVRS are they, who though they cannot attaine to the sublime dignity of Martyrdome, yet with their good life & vertuous actions they confesse Christ to be true God and Man, and are ready to dye, if so it should please him, in defence of the least article of his holy doctrine. And because the Blessed Virgin in this point hath gone so farre beyond them all, and left them so memorable examples of Constancy and Fortitude; therfore she is not only sayd to be their comforter, as we haue already meditated; but also their Queene,

Regina,

Regina Confessorum, Queene of Confessors.

THE XLIIII. MEDITATION.

Regina Virginum, ora pro nobis.

Queene of Virgins, pray for vs.

OVR Blessed Lady hauing remayned euer a perpetual Virgin, and being the first that dedicated herselfe vnto God by holy vow of Virginity; became the inuentour & foundresse of this Angelicall life; and therfore by great reason, she is said to be the *Queene of Virgins*, and by which title we daily call vpon her saying, *Regina Virginum, ora pro nobis*, Queene of Virgins pray for vs.

THE XLV. MEDITATION.

Regina Sanctorũ omniũ ora pro nobis.
Queen of all Saints, pray for vs.

BRIEFLY in this tytle we may consider, that what vertue or excellent guift soeuer hath beene eminent in any Saint, hath shyned farre more in our blessed Lady; yea whatsoeuer naturall or supernaturall guift or grace, hath beene in them all togeather, hath byn all at once in this B. Queene; & therfore most worthily we salute her by this renowned tytle of *Queene of all Saints*: and by this desiring her powerfull prayers, and holy intercession, we say, *Regina Sanctorum omnium ora pro nobis*, Queene of all Saints pray for vs. Amen. *Aue Maris stella*

THE CONCLVSION,

WITH AN APOSTROPHE

to the euer B Virgin.

MY intention (Right Honourable, and moſt worthy) in theſe ſhort meditations, vvas not to delight your eares with flowing eloquence, which is both beyond my reach, & paſt my skil; but my chiefe purpoſe tending only to the encouragement of ſo Noble a CONGREGATION, ſo happily inſtituted in Honor of the Imaculate Virgin Mary, Mother of God, & the ſatisfaction which

I hoped many other of her deuout Childrē by reading therof, would find; I was the more willing to let it come to your view in the ſimple attyre wherwith it is veſted.

For albeit, of it ſelfe, it be ſcarce worthy to be read of any; yet for her ſake, of whome it treateth, I deſyre it may diligently be peruſed of many. Wherfore if any thing heerin be found worthy of commendations, let the prayſe be giuen to the true deſeruer; for al that is blame-worthy, is wholly myne; for which I craue, both your pardon for my errour and boldnes, and allſo your prayers, for my future diligence, and amendment.

And thou thrice-happy and euer B. Virgin, Mother, Queene & Empreſſe of Heauen & Earth,

whoſe

whose Honour, next after thy sweet Sonne I most intend, in these my willing, but weake labours; be thou a Starre to enlighten those that read them; a Mistresse to instruct them, a Patroneſſe to defend them, and a safe Guide to direct them, to the hauen of Eternall blisse, and euerlasting happines. Amen.

THE

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